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THE CONSULATE AND EMPIRE OF FRANCE

VOL. X.

A. Wilcox del. Pannier s.

PRINCESS PAULINE BORGHESE

HISTORY OF THE CONSULATE AND THE EMPIRE OF FRANCE UNDER NAPOLEON

By LOUIS ADOLPHE THIERS

TRANSLATED, WITH THE SANCTION AND APPROVAL
OF THE AUTHOR, BY
D. FORBES CAMPBELL AND JOHN STEBBING

With Thirty-six Steel Plates

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HISTORY OF THE CONSULATE AND THE EMPIRE OF FRANCE UNDER NAPOLEON.

BOOK LIII.

FIRST ABDICATION.

NAPOLEON wished to afford some comfort to the Parisians, who had of late been so terribly alarmed; he wished to make them enjoy his triumphs, and he wished, above all, to raise their spirits, which would be a serious advantage with regard to the organisation of his forces, for little public aid can be obtained from a dispirited people. Influenced by these considerations, he had commanded a military and religious ceremony, for the reception of the standards, and the entrance into Paris of the 25,000 prisoners captured from the enemy. He wished that these prisoners, crossing Paris from east to west, should traverse the entire extent of the boulevards, in order that the Parisians might be visually assured of the reality of the wonders performed by their emperor. The difficulties of Napoleon's position must serve as an excuse for this ostentatious display.

When the approach of these prisoners was announced, all the population of Paris thronged to the boulevards, to see defile before them Prussians, Austrians, and Russians, marching disarmed, headed by their officers and generals. The prisoners, indeed, displayed no arrogance in their demeanour, neither did they seem utterly dejected; it was easy to discern in their faces a very different expression from that formerly manifested by the captives taken at Austerlitz and Jena. There was a certain look of confidence and real pride at having been captured so close to our capital.

Though the people of Paris were tired of the imperial rule, and perfectly well aware of the bad effects of a despotism, which, after having formerly carried war even to the gates of

the Kremlin, now brought it back to the foot of Montmartre, still the mass of the people, yielding to the impression of the moment, could not help applauding Napoleon's late successes, and experienced an intense satisfaction in beholding defile before them these foreign soldiers conquered and captive, whom they had feared to see enter Paris as conquerors and destroyers. As to the rest, with a delicacy natural to the French people, they offered no offence to the prisoners. Their thoughtlessness, alas! had been too great. After the first emotion of triumph, the French lookers-on experienced a movement of pity, and more than one kind and compassionate creature offered an alms that was received with sincere gratitude.

At court, affairs assumed a calmer aspect. Numerous visitors flocked round the empress and the King of Rome, and amongst them were conspicuous those high functionaries who, having believed the imperial throne to be in danger, had, by removing to a distance, hoped to escape being crushed in the ruins. They reappeared in high spirits, though some seemed rather anxious about the reception they should receive, but all lauding the glorious campaign whose rashness they had condemned some days before; and they who, within the forty-eight hours, had declared that the emperor was mad not to accept the frontiers of 1790, now exclaimed against so dishonouring a peace, and protested aloud that the Frankfort bases ought to be the absolute condition of the future peace. Marie Louise was too little acquainted with our country to understand and judge these men; besides, she was now almost as much agitated by joy as she had before been by fear, but she gave all her visitors a kindly reception, and began to flatter herself that she should soon see a return of those glorious days that inaugurated her arrival in France.*

This joy, the thoughtlessness it induces and excuses, was by no means discernible amongst the adverse parties. Though these parties were distinct—the old revolutionists and the royalists—still both agreed in regretting the success of Napoleon, though the revolutionists experienced an emotion something like joy, so much did they dread the foreign powers and detest the Bourbons. The royalists, after having for a moment hoped the return of their beloved princes, asked themselves now with vexation, whether they must suddenly abandon this hope. They sought an excuse for their secret wishes in the

* I do not fancy anything. I quote these details from the correspondence of the minister of police, and from that of the high chancellor, who informed Napoleon of the most minute details. I inform the reader of this for the hundredth, and happily the last time, for I am near the end of my task. But I do not weary of defending my responsibility as a historian, and this is a scrupulosity that the reader will pardon me, for it will prove to him, I hope, my love of truth.

misfortunes that Napoleon had brought on France, and said within themselves that any hand, even that of a foreigner, ought to be welcome, if it delivered them from so odious a despotism. Still they contented themselves with forming wishes, and remained completely inactive. Whispered conversations between members of the ancient nobility and the clergy, malevolent reports, in which our reverses were exaggerated and our triumphs disputed, with an inert resistance to the measures of the administration, these constituted their entire efforts against the imperial government. The emigrants, who since the Revolution had lived abroad with the Bourbon princes, had almost lost the habit of corresponding with their friends in the interior of France. They made an effort to resume their connections now, but met no encouragement, and indeed, in the provinces threatened with invasion no one would have dared to aid them in proclaiming the Bourbons. A few royalists scarcely dared to venture a manifestation in the cities, already securely occupied by the allied armies. At Troyes, two old chevaliers of St. Louis had presented a petition to Alexander, praying the re-establishment of the Bourbons. This was an act of imprudence for which these unfortunate men paid dearly. At Paris, two members of the old nobility were talked of—the Messrs. de Polignac—who, having been transferred from a jail to a madhouse, had escaped, and gone at every risk to offer to the Count d'Artois their faithful services.

It was evident that nothing serious could be attempted by these men, who, during twenty-five years, had been too much estranged from French affairs to possess any influence in the country. It would be necessary that members of the actual government, some of whom were discontented with Napoleon, who had ill-treated them, and others who were desirous of securing a position for themselves under the new régime, should stretch forth a hand to the royalists if a plot of any importance were to be framed, every precaution being taken to conceal the movement. Something of the kind was actually attempted, but with profound secrecy and fear.

Of all the malcontents whom the imperial régime had created, the most conspicuous—he who most occupied the minds of the friends of the Bourbons, as well as the friends of the Bonapartes—was M. de Talleyrand. He was the object of the hopes of the one party, and of the fear of the other, and though he was in a position to play a great part, and on the eve of doing so, both parties greatly exaggerated what he could or what he would dare to do. Were the decisive moment come, Napoleon completely conquered, and the enemy in possession of Paris, it was incontestable that M. de Talleyrand was the only man capable of constructing a new government on the ruins of the over-

thrown dynasty; but to believe that he had either the ability or the will to take the initiative in a revolution whilst the *drapeau tricolor* still floated on the Tuileries was a groundless terror on the part of the imperial police, and a pleasing illusion cherished in the royalist coteries. M. de Talleyrand's ill-will towards the emperor was undoubtedly as strong as it could be, but neither the means at his disposal nor his personal courage were commensurate with his inclination. By refusing the portfolio of foreign affairs two months previously, because he would not be allowed at the same time to keep his rank of grand dignitary, he had almost broken off his connection with the imperial house, and as we have seen, Napoleon had, on the very eve of his departure for the army, treated him in a manner calculated to awaken his most lively fears. He had learned from hints thrown out by persons connected with the Bourbons —what, indeed, he knew before—that the aid of a married bishop would be favourably received by these pious princes, for there is no difficulty that cannot be overcome when there is a question of services—not services already rendered, but which are to be rendered. Some persons have a very pliant memory —they forget or remember according to the interests of the hour. M. de Talleyrand, with his profound knowledge of men and things, had nothing to learn in his quality of politician; having finished with the Bonapartes, it was easy to recommence with the Bourbons. But he well knew the Duke of Rovigo—easy-mannered, familiar, even friendly with the persons upon whom he was acting as a spy, but capable, upon any serious suspicion, or at the first order from Napoleon, of laying his coarse soldier-hand on the flowing mantle of a grand dignitary. Influenced by these considerations, M. de Talleyrand was extremely circumspect.

At his mansion in the Rue St. Florentin, which has since become celebrated, M. de Talleyrand received, amongst other persons, the Duke de Dalberg, the Abbé de Pradt, and the Baron Louis.

M. de Dalberg was descended from the illustrious Dalbergs of Germany, and nephew to the prince-primate. He was first an enemy, afterwards a friend, to the imperial dynasty. During the time when Church property was being secularised, he came in for a large share; but he afterwards quarrelled with Napoleon because the latter had transferred the lands of the prince-primate to Prince Eugène. The Duke de Dalberg was short of stature; in manner, a mixture of the French and German; his countenance was animated, his temper lively, his opinions were frankly liberal, and his intellect strong and subtle. He had often given vent to his discontent at M. de Talleyrand's with a freedom that had brought his young wife into disgrace

at court. He was annoyed at this, and did not conceal his vexation. The Abbé de Pradt had been banished to his diocese since his unfortunate embassy to Warsaw, an affair difficult in itself, and rendered still more so by the defects of the abbé's temper. He had returned to Paris since our late reverses, and mingled his observations with those of the Duke de Dalberg in a tone that could not fail to attract the attention of the police, even had they been far less observant than they really were. Baron Louis had formerly taken minor orders, but afterwards abandoned the idea of entering the Church, and devoted himself to the study of political economy. He was endowed with a true genius for finance, and a spirit at once active and persevering. He was an advocate of that legitimate liberty which sound policy sanctions; he detested the imperial régime from motives dictated by an enlightened reason, and was always happy to associate with men of high intellect whose opinions corresponded with his own.

These personages and some others met frequently at M. de Talleyrand's and there gave utterance to their sentiments. The petulant Abbé de Pradt declared, with his characteristic vivacity and without circumlocution, that the Bourbons ought to be put in the place of the Bonapartes: the Duke de Dalberg spoke less openly, though he was equally desirous of effecting the same object, and capable of working more systematically for the attainment of his ends. Baron Louis wished that a termination should be put to a despotism which during the last two years had exceeded all bounds. M. de Talleyrand heard all this with his ordinary air of languid indifference. He listened with attention sufficient to encourage the speakers, without compromising himself personally. Sometimes, however, he gave utterance to his sentiments with one of his visitors, rarely with two; but he always selected the Duke de Dalberg, of whose hardihood, dexterity, and numerous connections he was well aware, and from whom he might expect efficacious aid. He looked upon the Abbé de Pradt as a giddy-brain, and considered the Baron Louis as a profound financier, both useful on certain occasions, but he gave neither his confidence, for at that moment he did not need either the brilliant talents of the one or the solid qualities of the other. He listened to their observations with a smile at once approving and evasive, and after having heard their opinions, he issued from his house and went to pay a visit to the Duke de Rovigo, under pretext of asking the news of the day. To the duke he testified the most lively interest in the success of the French army, affected to regret the inability of the greater number of Napoleon's agents, and said it was very unfortunate that so great a man should be so ill served. In all this the Duke de Rovigo coincided, for this minister, discontented with

the greater number of his colleagues, complaining of being no longer listened to by Napoleon, regretting that he was separated from M. de Talleyrand, was one of those who would listen to any reasonable criticism of the existing state of things, provided the censure sprang from a spirit of devotedness to the imperial government, and not from a desire to overthrow it. With the Duke de Rovigo, M. de Talleyrand affected to be of the number of those who blame because they love, still he only half deceived his clear-sighted interlocutor, but he deceived him sufficiently to weaken the effect of the remarks uttered at the mansion Rue St. Florentin. Having returned to his own house, M. de Talleyrand again listened to those daring conversations, but acknowledged only to the Duke de Dalberg his desire to withdraw from an insupportable yoke; with him he talked over the means, but was yet far from discovering them. To attempt anything whilst the allies were still so distant from Paris seemed to him impracticable. One idea had great weight both with the Duke de Dalberg and M. de Talleyrand: it was, that by manœuvring between the Seine and the Marne, and prolonging the negotiations at Chatillon, the allies were preserving for Napoleon his only chances of safety. To break off all negotiation with him, and then point him out to France as the only obstacle to peace; to take advantage of an interval between the rejection of one set of propositions and the framing of others, and seize upon the capital—these were, in their opinion, the only means of putting an end to the war. The allies should have no sooner reached the gates of Paris than their friends inside would rise in their favour, and declare Napoleon dethroned. By these means they would break in his grasp the sword which it was impossible to wrench from him.

These were the ideas which M. de Talleyrand and the Duke de Dalberg wished to communicate to the allied sovereigns; but it is a singular proof of the little intercourse that existed between these in the city and those outside, that they had not been able to find any one who might act as intermediary. Thus, though the Messrs. Polignac had succeeded in escaping, they had brought no communication from M. de Talleyrand nor from the Duke de Dalberg, the only men at that moment able to serve the Bourbon cause.

There was, however, at Paris a gentleman of Dauphiné, possessed of high intelligence and courage. He had served formerly in the army of Condé, and though still a royalist in feeling, had kept up a connection with his compatriot M. de Montalivet, who had obtained for him the title of Baron and that of Inspector of the Imperial Sheepwalks. Notwithstanding the slender tie with which these demi-favours had attached him to the empire, he felt his heart bound at the slightest hope of

again seeing the Bourbons in France. This Dauphinois gentleman was M. de Vitrolles. Fond of coming into contact with men in place, both through curiosity and ambition, he had made the acquaintance of the Duke de Dalberg, who knew all the restless spirits of the time, and was known by them. The duke introduced him to M. de Talleyrand, whom he sometimes visited. M. de Dalberg, looking for a bold-spirited deputy who would venture to repair to the headquarters of the allies, and make known there his opinions and those of M. de Talleyrand, thought of M. de Vitrolles, and found him quite ready to undertake the journey. The difficulty was in accrediting M. de Vitrolles to these great personages—sovereigns and ministers—who held their sittings at Langres, at Brienne, and at Troyes, as the exigencies of the war required. One man alone could give credentials that would secure a reception to the person that should come in his name, and this man was M. de Talleyrand. But he would never confide to any one whomsoever a positive proof of his having acted against the established government, and he had refused to send anything but very sensible advice, which could be transmitted verbally to the allied sovereigns and ministers. M. de Dalberg, who never hesitated when he could advance a step towards his object, did what M. de Talleyrand would not venture to do. A German by birth, he had frequently met M. de Stadion at Vienna; he furnished M. de Vitrolles some tokens sufficient to prove incontestably that the bearer came from him, and sent him forth charged to relate what we have already explained, and what the Count Pozzo di Borgo repeated every day to the Emperor Alexander, that is to say, that the allies ought to break off all communication with Napoleon, and march without delay on Paris. The armistice which appeared to be in process of negotiation at the outposts, and intelligence of which had already reached Paris, was in the eyes of the Duke de Dalberg an additional reason for informing the allies immediately, that to negotiate with Napoleon was to stretch out to him a supporting hand at the very moment that he was about to fall. After having seen the sovereigns and the foreign ministers, M. de Vitrolles was to visit the Count d'Artois, who was reported to be at that time in Franche-Comté, and give him good advice, of which this prince stood more in need than the ministers of the coalition. M. de Vitrolles set out by the Sens route, with fictitious passports, and this he effected without the knowledge of the Duke de Rovigo. The secret of his mission was confined to himself, M. de Talleyrand, and the Duke de Dalberg. Being obliged to traverse the French and allied armies, he had numerous difficulties to overcome, and could not arrive very speedily at the headquarters whither he was bound.

Whilst these secret plots were being prepared, which, however, contributed much less than his own errors to the fall of Napoleon, the latter had entered Troyes, and turned his attention to the conditions of the proposed armistice. The armistice, considered as a means of allowing the allies to gain time whilst he lost it, presented no great advantages, for he wished, on the contrary, to meet them as soon as possible and fight a decisive battle. But the armistice would be useful to him as a means of negotiating more directly, more immediately under his own eye, and whilst the impression of his late successes was still vivid. He had therefore consented to send one of his aides-de-camp to the outposts, and had confided this mission to the Count de Flahaut.* His instructions were to refuse a suspension of hostilities during the negotiation, for Napoleon was unwilling, for the sake of exchanging a few remarks that might never produce any result, to allow Prince Schwarzenberg to escape. He was further instructed to require a preamble declaring that the treaty for peace should be on the Frankfort bases, and lastly, to draw the line of separation between the belligerent armies in such a way as to imply that Mayence and Antwerp were to belong to France. Should these conditions be accepted, Napoleon could, in fact, lay down his arms, for he would probably have no further occasion to resume them, as he was resolved not to continue the struggle if the allies allowed him to retain the line of the Rhine and the Alps. But to lay down his arms without a guarantee of the Frankfort bases, would be, in his eyes, to lose all the advantages he had lately acquired, fortune having now, as he believed, declared in his favour.

M. de Flahaut left Troyes on the 24th, the very day that Napoleon entered the city; he repaired to the village of Lusigny, about three leagues distant, and found there M. de Schouvaloff on the part of Russia, M. de Rauch to represent the interests of Prussia, and M. de Langenau for Austria. At this moment Marshal Oudinot, pressing the enemy's rearguard on Vandœuvres, was riddling with balls the very place where the negotiators were about to assemble. At M. de Flahaut's request, the marshal turned his arms elsewhere, and the village of Lusigny was declared neutral ground.

The envoys of the allied powers appeared to desire a prompt solution of the impending difficulties. M. de Flahaut announced without delay the conditions of which he was the bearer, and he proposed two things—first, the continuation of hostilities during the negotiations, and secondly, the insertion of a

* These instructions are still at the office of the Secretary of State. They were not, as has been said, purely verbal. Their purport has therefore been very clearly ascertained.

preamble ratifying the Frankfort bases. These two points were not of a nature to please the other envoys, for the first proposal deprived the armistice of its principal interest, and the second gave it a signification contrary to the designs of the coalition. Evidently discontented, the three commissioners replied, that they had not authority to treat diplomatic questions. To procure a short suspension of hostilities, and to fix temporarily the boundaries on which the belligerent armies should pause, constituted, they said, their sole mission. They wished to leave immediately, but M. de Flahaut detained them, and begged them to ask for fresh instructions, promising to do the same himself. They consented to remain at Lusigny, on condition that all the commissioners should write to their respective headquarters for fresh instructions.

Napoleon, though he was firmly resolved not to yield on the question of the natural frontiers, and that for this reason he did not wish to interrupt the course of his successes, excepting to be assured of the Frankfort bases, still he was not wholly indifferent to the advantage of concluding an armistice, which would be equivalent to signing the preliminaries of peace, and which would induce a momentary tranquillisation of the intense animosity excited against him. He therefore abandoned the preamble, which it was difficult to insert in a mere armistice, and consented to the continuation of the negotiations, hoping by some happy circumvention to return to his original object. If, for example, in fixing the limits that were to separate the armies, he could persuade the allies to leave him Antwerp as a boundary in the Low Countries, and Chambéry in the direction of Savoy, he would induce from this concession the strongest presumption for the definite regulation of the frontiers. He consequently authorised M. de Flahaut to continue the negotiations commenced at Lusigny, even though the preamble touching the Frankfort bases should not be accorded; but he was to propose that the allied armies should retire beyond Antwerp in the Low Countries, and that in Savoy they should not advance to Chambéry, to which they were then very near. If the allied commissioners accepted this line of demarcation, it would be a presumption in favour of the natural frontiers, which, without being equivalent to the mention of the Frankfort bases, would be, in point of fact, an acceptation of the natural frontiers.

It was according to these instructions that M. de Flahaut was to continue the negotiations at Lusigny. General Langenau, who had fallen ill, had been replaced by General Ducca, who was bearer of the most pacific assurances and advice from the Emperor Francis. The new Austrian envoy was charged earnestly to advise Napoleon, through M. de Flahaut, not to

persevere in continuing the war, for the present opportunity was the last when he could, under the influence of his recent successes, treat advantageously. The advice was excellent if by making certain sacrifices Napoleon could obtain better terms than the frontiers of 1790—if, for example, by giving up Antwerp and Brussels he could retain Mayence and Cologne. But if this advice meant that, in order to save the dynasty, it would be necessary to abandon all the acquisitions made by France since 1790, the advice, which it was natural to a father-in-law to give, would be unbecoming in Napoleon to follow, and his determination to perish, though his ruin should involve that of thousands of men, was more consonant with his real glory and the true interests of France.

In the official conferences Messrs. de Schouvaloff, de Rauch, and Ducca declared, as might have been foreseen, that they had met merely to consider some military arrangements; that all consideration touching other subjects was entirely foreign to their mission; that they had received formal instructions to abstain from such matters; and that consequently the required preamble was inadmissible.

This declaration not having produced on M. de Flahaut's part a rupture of the conferences, the commissioners proceeded to the discussion of the line of demarcation. The French commissioner proposed his, conformable to the views we have explained; the allied commissioners proposed theirs, conformable to the political resolutions of their courts. They wished to advance northwards as far as Lille; they consented to retrograde a little in Champagne and Burgundy, leaving the possession of Vitry, Chaumont, and Langres an open question, but they obstinately refused any concession touching Chambéry, and thus, like Napoleon, they reproduced indirectly in the conditions of the armistice the fundamental pretensions of their respective courts. The discussions continued, and the deputies again applied for fresh instructions, which would necessarily prolong the negotiation for some days.

The conferences might have been broken up now, for it was easy to see that the deputies would not come to an agreement, unless some important military events occurred immediately. But it did not suit either party to break off just then, for these negotiations, not causing a suspension of hostilities, did no injury to either side, and Prince Schwarzenberg hoped that during the negotiations Napoleon's military operations might in some degree be relaxed. Napoleon, on his side, though firmly determined to continue the struggle, still feeling the necessity of peace, did not wish to close this way of obtaining his object by negotiation, which now opened to his view. He could at any moment shut it up by a single word, and by

leaving it open he had a resource in case of necessity, and the means of arresting the upraised arm of the combatants. He therefore allowed his commissioner to discuss with those of the allies the innumerable sinuosities of a line of demarcation which, commencing at Antwerp, was to terminate at Chambéry.

During the two days that the negotiations lasted—the 24th and 25th February—Napoleon was unfortunately guilty of an act of vengeance, the combined result of premeditation and anger.

On entering into Troyes he was assailed by cries from a portion of the population, denouncing certain individuals, guilty, as they said, of having treated with the enemy during their stay in the capital of Champagne. Though everybody was tired of the imperial régime, still, at the sight of foreigners and at the name of the Bourbons, this unanimity of opinion disappeared to give place to the old party divisions. The partisans of royalty, on making their appearance, awakened in the hearts of the revolutionists a very natural anger, especially when they saw the royalists appeal to the enemies of France to secure the triumph of their cause. At Troyes, two chevaliers of St. Louis, Messrs. de Vidranges and de Gonault, displayed the white cockade, and presented an address to Alexander, praying the restoration of the Bourbons. It was the first manifestation of this kind that the allied sovereigns had met since their entrance into France, and Alexander, with a sentiment of humanity that does him honour, did not omit remarking to those who had indulged in this exhibition of royalty, that nothing was more variable than the movements of armies, alternately exposed to advance or retire; and above all, that nothing being more uncertain than a change of dynasty in France, he feared they had committed an imprudence which might be fatal to them. Spite of this observation, the imprudence was committed, and the royalists of Troyes had done nothing to extenuate it. They had, on the contrary, displayed a kind of ostentation, indicative certainly of courage, in decking themselves with the white cockade.

The people of Troyes, though many royalists were to be found amongst them, were very much irritated against those who had appeared to sympathise with the enemy. On this account, denunciations smote the ears of Napoleon on every side when he entered the city. On hearing what had taken place, his anger blazed forth, and he ordered the arrest of those who had been pointed out to him as criminals. Reflection, instead of calming his passion, rather served to excite it. At this moment the news arrived of the sudden appearance of the Count d'Artois in Franche-Comté, whilst the Duke d'Angoulême appeared in Guyenne, and the Duke de Berry off the coast of

Brittany. It might happen that the royalist movements would serve the allied armies, and even produce a bad effect at Paris. Napoleon therefore resolved to stop these party movements by a severe measure, which, falling on one or two rash men, would have the effect of restraining others. The crime committed at Troyes could easily be proved, the law was unquestionably clear on the matter, and the process of military law, which the condition of the country warranted, was rapid and certain in execution.

Napoleon gave orders to arrest the accused, and bring them before this exceptional tribunal. M. de Vidranges, one of the two accused, had taken flight. M. de Gonault, an old, white-headed man, who had been drawn into this affair by others, had not thought of escaping. He was arrested, judged, condemned, and delivered over to the power of the military law.

An excellent man, equerry to the emperor, and devoted to his person—M. de Mesgrigny—a native of Champagne, anxious to save his compatriots, threw himself, with the family of the criminal, at the feet of Napoleon. The latter, whose anger was quick but transient, was touched at the sight of the suppliants, and said—"Well, let him be pardoned if there is still time." The friends of the accused hastened to announce the pardon, but the unfortunate old man was already shot.

Napoleon sincerely regretted this event, but when thousands of human beings were falling every instant around him, he was not the man likely to dwell long on such incidents. He again turned his attention to that theatre where he was called on to direct the most important events, and which succeeded each other with wondrous rapidity. At this moment, in fact, new movements were discernible on the part of the enemy, which had the effect of exciting his genius to the creation of new and formidable combinations.

Prince Schwarzenberg had fallen back on Chaumont, having left at Bar-sur-Aube the Bavarians of the Marshal de Wrède, the Russians of Prince Wittgenstein, and along the Aube the Wurtembergers of the prince-royal, with the Austrian corps of Giulay. He had at Chaumont even the Russian and Prussian guards, and a corps of grenadiers and cuirassiers, that constituted a part of the Austrian reserve. He had detached a portion of Colloredo's corps through Dijon on Lyon, to go to the relief of Bubna. His forces were consequently greatly diminished; he had not more than 90,000 men under his command.

Blucher had remained between the Seine and the Aube, manœuvring from Méry to Arcis with 48,000 men, awaiting impatiently a signal for the pitched battle, in which he flattered himself to be able, not alone to avenge his recent humiliations, but to seize the keys of Paris. When his staff learned that the

commander-in-chief had abandoned the idea of fighting this battle, and had even fallen back on Langres, there was, as may be easily supposed, a violent outcry raised against the Austrians, against their weakness, their duplicity, and intrigues. The temporising Austrian Prince Schwarzenberg was treated as men of his stamp have always been by their irritable *confrères*. The Prussians said that if the troops of Marie Louise's father abandoned the cause of the allies, that should not prevent them from marching on Paris; they would be able to make their way to that city, spite of Napoleon, and spite of his boasting soldiers, that now thought themselves all victorious. The Prussians certainly had reason to feel proud and self-confident when they thought of Montmirail and Vauchamps.

And yet in this fiery-spirited Prussian staff there was no authority for action, but what was assumed in disobeying the King of Prussia; and though they were quite willing to make use of this species of authority, they were not daring enough to venture a march on Paris with 48,000 men. They had recourse to the usual means. They applied to the Emperor Alexander, whom they were sure of bringing over to their opinions by flattery, and accordingly sent emissaries to ask him two things —liberty of action for the army of Silesia, and a considerable augmentation of troops, which could be easily procured. This augmentation might consist of the addition of Bulow and Wintzingerode's corps, the one Prussian, the other Russian, that, after leaving detachments in the Low Countries to blockade the fortresses, were advancing through the Ardennes. These troops should indeed be withdrawn from Bernadotte, under whose command they then were; but there were many causes of complaint then existing against the Swedish prince. The Prussians questioned his capacity, his courage, and his honesty. They pronounced him to be a soldier without energy, and a traitor to the interests of Europe, occupying more than 100,000 men in his own affair of Norway, and thus endangering the safety of the coalition through want of sufficient forces to concentrate on a defensive point. Bernadotte had, it is true, at last marched to the Rhine, whither he had been preceded by Bulow and Wintzingerode's corps. "But," the Prussians said, "he would always make use of these troops for the advancement of his personal views, trying to become, for example, Emperor of the French, if from the throne of Sweden he could spring upon that of France." By withdrawing Bulow and Wintzingerode's 50,000 men from Bernadotte, and putting them under the command of Blucher, the latter would have 100,000 men under his command, and might, by advancing on Napoleon's rear, dissipate the phantom that kept Prince Schwarzenberg motionless through terror at Chaumont.

Such were the sentiments that Blucher's envoys were commissioned to express to the Emperor Alexander, and these sentiments were likely to be well received, with the exception of what was directed against his protégé Bernadotte.

Alexander listened to what was said with much satisfaction and goodwill. Some days had elapsed since the mischances of Nangis and Montereau, and his lively imagination, having recovered the shocks then experienced, was again inflamed in contemplating the prospect of entering Paris, which was now laid open before him. He listened favourably to Blucher's propositions, and convoked a council of the allies, to take them into consideration. The discussion was very warm. Besides the three sovereigns, there were present at this council, Messrs. de Metternich, de Nesselrode, de Hardenberg, Lord Castlereagh, Prince Schwarzenberg, and the principal generals of the coalition. Alexander condemned the armistice and the temporising system, insisted on the necessity of carrying on the war with vigour, and declared that, for his part, he was willing to carry it on with his faithful ally the King of Prussia, should the others abandon him, upon which the Emperor Francis demanded whether he was no longer numbered amongst those of the coalition that could be reckoned on. Thereupon the allied sovereigns shook hands, and agreed upon the necessity of acting promptly and vigorously, so as to leave no respite to the common enemy. After some explanations more unanimity of opinion was found to exist amongst them than was at first expected. Both sides admitted that the armistice compromised no principle, for it did not even suspend hostilities, and the only proposition that could either directly or indirectly derogate from the propositions of Chatillon had been carefully removed. There was consequently no change in the actual position of the allied powers. They had certainly paused at Chaumont, but it was the result of a very natural prudence, that they should remain at a distance from Napoleon whilst they were obliged to lessen their own strength by sending to Count de Bubna, at Dijon, succours that were declared indispensable. As to the rest, the formation of a powerful army that might act on Napoleon's flanks and force him to fall back was an excellent project, to which no objection could be made if the means existed of carrying it into effect. To grant Marshal Blucher perfect liberty of action and increase his army to double the present number was not objected to by any one. The great difficulty consisted of depriving the jealous and susceptible Bernadotte of two corps that constituted the chief part of the forces under his command. He had already complained and even threatened, because it seemed to him that his services were not rated as highly as they deserved, and he hinted that he might possibly retire to

his tent and withdraw his aid. Different causes had concurred to ruffle his temper. Austria continued to protect Denmark against Sweden, and had refused to admit a Swedish plenipotentiary to the Chatillon congress. As to this second point, it must not be forgotten that England, Prussia, Russia, and Austria were empowered to treat for the allied estates, great and small, and certainly Prince Bernadotte's personal worth did not confer so much importance on Sweden as to entitle her to be classed as a sixth great power. To these two causes of discontent was added a third, more intense in its action, though not so openly avowed. The English minister, often indirectly questioned as to the projects of the coalition with regard to the throne of France, had told the inquisitive Bernadotte flatly that the allied powers were not making war for the purpose of substituting one dynasty for another, that questions of home government did not concern them, that they would allow France to choose for herself should another revolution break out, but that as far as the English were concerned they considered the Bourbon alone fit to replace the Bonaparte dynasty. The new-made Swede, who would willingly have again become French to obtain the throne of France, displayed from the time of this explanation extreme ill-humour at the slightest contradiction. The allies certainly did not fear him, still a disturbance of any kind in the affairs of the coalition, whilst all their forces were engaged against Napoleon, would be of some importance, and they feared to get into difficulties by depriving Bernadotte of the most considerable portion of his army.

The allies were only stopped by this apprehension, and Alexander, notwithstanding his desire to satisfy the hot-tempered Blucher, hesitated, as well as the other members of the council, when Lord Castlereagh, rising suddenly and acting as a Providence that determines everything, asked the military men whether they really considered the addition of Bulow and Wintzingerode's corps necessary to the army of Silesia. Having received a reply in the affirmative, he declared that he would take upon himself to smooth away all difficulties with the Prince-Royal of Sweden. This declaration put an end to all hesitation, and it was decided that Blucher should receive the addition of Bulow and Wintzingerode's corps, with permission to manœuvre between the Seine and the Marne, in whatever way he believed most advantageous to the general interests of the war. Alexander dismissed Blucher's emissaries filled with joy, and it must be said, in relating to them what had taken place, he very much exaggerated what the advocates of active measures owed to him on this occasion.

But what means did Lord Castlereagh possess of arranging everything by his own authority? We shall explain this in a

few words. In the first place, his mind was clear-sighted and firm; he was consequently able to seize at once the essential points of an argument. In the next place, he held in his hands the power that springs from money, and in the present instance this was a very great power, considering that Sweden was not rich enough to pay her army. To have or not to have twenty-five millions, was the same for Bernadotte as having or not having a Swedish army. Besides, Sweden, surrounded on every side by the English navy, durst not venture one false step. And lastly, Lord Castlereagh possessed the means of soothing the Prince of Sweden's pride. A German corps, drawn from the different principalities lately separated from France, had been embodied in Hanover, and paid by England. This corps amounted to 25,000 men, commanded by General Walmoden. There were 7000 or 8000 English in Holland, under General Graham. The Prince of Orange was busy recruiting the Dutch army, and had already assembled from 10,000 to 12,000 men, who were also to receive their pay, out of British subsidies. Lord Castlereagh need only say a word, and all these troops passed under the command of such or such a general. He decided they should be placed under the orders of the Prince of Sweden, who would then combine under his authority, besides Swedes and Danes, who had been forced to give in their submission, Germans, English, and Dutch, including the Prince of Orange. The command of such a variety of troops would give him in the north the appearance of a king of kings, which ought to satisfy his pride, and indemnify him for the troops of which he was deprived.

Bernadotte was made acquainted with these arrangements, and an order immediately despatched to the corps of Bulow and Wintzingerode to place themselves under the command of Marshal Blucher.

Lord Castlereagh profited of what had occurred to render the coalition a fresh service not less important than the preceding.

The want of union amongst the allies was deeply felt, and it was feared every moment that the present coalition might dissolve, like all those which during the last twenty years had fallen beneath the sword of Napoleon. The bare thought of such an event was alarming, for if the allies committed the error of breaking up the coalition, the tyrant of Europe, as they called the Emperor of the French, would again become as powerful and more malignant than ever, and would not fail to trample on his present opponents. This well-founded fear obtained in the highest degree in the allied camp, and yet did not prevent disagreeable remarks, ill offices, and violent private quarrels. The late letters from Napoleon to the Emperor

Francis and Prince Schwarzenberg, which the Austrian cabinet had too much tact to conceal, had increased the general feeling of apprehension, and though the fidelity of Austria did not appear to be shaken, still it was desirable that the bonds of the coalition should be drawn closer, in order to convince Napoleon that neither his profound cunning nor his formidable sword could sever the ties that bound his enemies together.

Lord Castlereagh was now revolving in his mind some striking measure by which the union of the allied powers might be more firmly cemented. Happily, an opportunity, the natural result of circumstances, soon presented itself. This was the conclusion of the new financial arrangements, which the three powers had incessantly solicited, since it had been decided that the war should be carried beyond the Rhine, and it was on this account Count Pozzo had been sent to London. These fresh arrangements offered an opportunity of binding the allies more closely together than anything that had yet occurred, for they could now stipulate with what intentions, for what length of time, and in what proportion, each should contribute to the common cause, and they should also consider what kind of alliance should be formed to secure, after the great struggle should be terminated, the results that had been obtained. It was in accordance with these views that Lord Castlereagh projected, and ordered to be drawn up, a new treaty, that he resolved to offer for signature to the allied courts. This treaty, besides the general object of cementing the union of the allied powers, had a particular object, exclusively English—that of increasing Great Britain's continental importance, and so securing her the means of carrying out certain views which she had very much at heart.

Lord Castlereagh consequently devised a solemn alliance between England, Russia, Austria, and Prussia, by which each of these powers was pledged to furnish a permanent contingent of 150,000 men until the present war should be terminated in a manner conformable to their wishes. The 600,000 men that this combination would place at the disposal of the coalition did not include the levies to be supplied by the secondary powers, and which, united to the others, would furnish a total of 800,000 men. England not being able to contribute 150,000 men from her own troops, undertook to subsidise foreign soldiers. She had 100,000 men in Spain, including English, Portuguese, and Spaniards, and it would be easy for her, with Hanoverians, Germans of different States, and Dutch, to raise a new contingent of 50,000 men.

Great Britain would thus acquire, independent of her maritime importance, a continental influence almost equal to that enjoyed by the three continental powers. To this she was able

to add an influence peculiar to herself, that of money, and Lord Castlereagh took upon himself to offer an annual subsidy of six millions sterling, to be paid during the entire duration of the war; and this money was to be equally divided between Russia, Prussia, and Austria. Thus England contributed a double aid to the common undertaking—a triple aid, indeed, if we take her navy into account; and the assistance she rendered ought naturally to give her a decisive authority over the other powers, and be a pledge that the conditions of the future peace should be based on her wishes.

It was further stipulated that the allies should promise not to listen to any private proposition, but to treat in common with the common enemy, according to the accepted conditions. Lord Castlereagh wishing, moreover, to provide for the future, and to bind the allies to the work they should have accomplished, conceived the project of maintaining the coalition for twenty years after the conclusion of the approaching peace. Each of the allies should be bound, after the close of the war, to keep on foot 60,000 men, making a total of 240,000, for the service of whichever of the allies France might attack, if, after the conclusion of the peace, she renewed her aggressions against her neighbours. This was a means of guaranteeing the existence of two kingdoms, whose creation England earnestly desired—that of the Low Countries, because it deprived us of Antwerp, and that of Piedmont, because it robbed us of Genoa.

There was an idea that began to find favour amongst the diplomatists of the coalition—it was not only to grant possessions on the left of the Rhine to the house of Orange, but also to grant some to Prussia, in order to establish an unceasing source of jealousy between that power and France. This idea had originated with Mr. Pitt in 1805, and was adopted by Lord Castlereagh, as it seemed an important means of strengthening the new kingdom that was to be created by the union of Belgium and Holland. This projected arrangement, which was advantageous to Prussia, though it compromised her with us, was not likely to meet any opposition; for to overthrow France, and bind her in iron fetters after having overthrown her, was at that time the wish, the hope, the joy of all Europe. But these events also furnished each of the sovereigns an opportunity of gratifying his private interests. Thus, for example, Russia demanded as a recompense for the arrangements to which she lent her aid, that Holland should give her a full receipt for the loans contracted at Amsterdam. England, as we have already seen, in order to complete her work, wished to marry the Princess Charlotte, heiress to the British crown, to the son of the Prince of Orange, and thus unite, in some sort,

under the same sceptre, the three kingdoms of the British empire and the new monarchy of the Low Countries.

In burdening England with enormous expenses, the new treaty afforded her such great advantages, that the bold-minded minister had not hesitated to propose the conditions, and insisted on their acceptance as a point which he would not yield. Consequently, Lord Castlereagh presented the project to the allied powers in conjunction with whom he governed Europe.

The proclamation of a new alliance that was to exist during the entire duration of the war, and be valid for twenty years after the conclusion of peace, in order to maintain the new European edifice about to be created, ought to be agreeable to all the contracting powers! for, even after the conclusion of peace, they might still fear ulterior enterprises on the part of France. The propositions of Lord Castlereagh were therefore accepted and signed at Chaumont, on the 1st of March. This was the famous treaty of Chaumont, which was the bases of the Holy Alliance, and which during nearly forty years influenced European policy, until Europe at length perceived it was not by France alone that the balance of power might be disturbed.

This treaty was signed amid the universal joy of the allies, who were all well pleased at being closely united and largely subsidised, with the exception of Austria, who, whilst she saw in the new alliance tranquillising assurances against the projects of France in Italy, did not find there any guarantee against the enterprises of Russia in Poland and the east. Lord Castlereagh did not stop here in his labours. He proposed and carried the resolution of persevering some time longer, but the period was to be limited, in negotiating at Chatillon. Peace had been offered to Napoleon on condition that France should retire within her ancient limits, and to be consistent with themselves, they ought, if he were willing, to treat with him. Besides, the stipulations of Chaumont, by giving to the coalition a duration of twenty years, were sufficiently reassuring against any attempts he might make for the recovery of his ancient conquests. But if he prolonged the negotiations with the evident intention of occupying the time of the allies, and trifling with them, they would fix a term, after which the negotiations should be broken off, and a definite resolution taken of treating with him no longer, which would be equivalent to a European declaration of his dethronement. But until that time arrived no measures opposed to his dynasty could be sanctioned, and the Count d'Artois in Franche-Comté, and the Duke d'Angoulême in Guyenne, were not to be received at the headquarters of the belligerent powers.

These measures were, with regard to the interests of the allies, so wisely planned that they received a prompt and

universal assent. It was by these measures that Lord Castlereagh established his personal influence, and above all, the influence of his country, in the European coalition. He wrote to his cabinet, that carrying out these projects would no doubt cost England a great deal, but he was sure of their being generally approved, for the question at issue had been either to seize or to lose the first place amongst the European powers, and he had not hesitated to secure that position, whatever it might cost the British treasury. He certainly had no cause to fear the rejection of his project, whatever might be the number of promised millions. England has always been made to pay for her greatness, and has rarely erred in the estimate of her worth.

As soon as these matters were determined, an order was despatched to the plenipotentiaries of the four cabinets, directing them to inform M. de Caulaincourt that they awaited a reply on the part of France; that if the proposed preliminaries were not approved, France might send others, which should be discussed in a spirit of conciliation, provided they did not deviate too widely from the principles laid down; but after a certain period had elapsed, the congress of Chatillon should be dissolved, and all further negotiation abandoned.

No sooner had Blucher and his advisers, Gneisenau, Muffling, and others, learned the resolution adopted by the allies of allowing them freedom of action, and reinforcing them with 50,000 men, than they again indulged the ambition which had already proved so fatal to them—that of being the first to enter Paris. They scarcely paused to examine whether, before they undertook this new offensive movement, it would be better to wait the junction of the 50,000 men destined for their support, and they immediately resolved to advance to the right, though in a slightly oblique direction—that is to say, towards the Marne —where they could more promptly rejoin Bulow and Wintzingerode, who had already set out, the one towards Soissons, the other towards Reims. In their feverish impatience they preferred joining these troops on the way, whatever danger might result from their isolated march, than to await their arrival in the vicinity of Prince Schwarzenberg, where the armies of Silesia and Bohemia might afford each other mutual assistance. They said to themselves, and with truth, that by this movement they would draw Napoleon towards them, and free Prince Schwarzenberg, but they did not add, that it was at the risk of involving themselves in imminent danger that they could free him from the enemy. Moreover, having seen some light troops galloping on their flank, they hoped in advancing towards the Marne to encounter Marshals Marmont and Mortier apart from Napoleon, and thus find an opportunity of revenging themselves for their

recent defeats. What they did not take into consideration was, that the movements of the French army were very differently calculated from that of the allies, and were not so much exposed to the chances of war.

However this may be, on the 24th February, Blucher, who had advanced as far as Méry, recrossed the Aube at Anglure, and advanced to Sézanne. Perceiving, though not very clearly, the perils of this march, he sent word to Prince Schwarzenberg that in order to free him from his enemies he was about to expose himself to great danger, and begged him earnestly, as soon as he should be freed from the presence of Napoleon, to advance, in order to render to the army of Silesia the same service that the latter was about to render to the army of Bohemia.

We have already seen what was the position of the Marshals Mortier and Marmont whilst Napoleon was returning from the Marne to the Seine to fight the battles of Nangis and Montereau. Marshal Mortier, who had been ordered to follow in the rear of d'York and Sacken towards Soissons, had not been able to overtake these two generals, who, by making a movement to the right, had escaped to Chalons; but Mortier retook Soissons, which had momentarily fallen into the enemy's possession. In pursuance of Napoleon's orders, which recalled him to the Marne, he had fallen back on Chateau-Thierry, and arrived there the very day that Blucher commenced the execution of his new projects. As to Marshal Marmont, placed between Etoges and Montmirail, so as to be in communication on one side with Marshal Mortier on the Marne, and on the other with Napoleon on the Aube, he had successively occupied Etoges, Montmirail, and Sézanne. Having seen Blucher cross the Aube at Anglure on the 24th, and return to Sézanne on the 25th, he had retired in good order on Esternay, behind the Grand-Morin, after having killed some of the enemy, without losing a man himself. His plan of action was now clearly laid down; it was, on seeing himself separated from Napoleon by Blucher's late movement, to fall back on the Marne, and there join Marshal Mortier, and dispute the country inch by inch with the enemy, until Napoleon should arrive to their assistance. He had sent word to Mortier, who was then at Chateau-Thierry, to proceed towards Ferté-sous-Jouarre, whither he would advance from another direction; he also informed Napoleon of what had taken place, praying him to come up as soon as possible.

On the morning of the 26th, Blucher having recommenced his pursuit, Marmont continued his retrograde movement as far as Ferté-Gaucher, then turning towards the Marne, he took the road to Ferté-sous-Jouarre. Blucher continued the pursuit of the previous evening without overtaking Mortier, and when he saw him take the direction of Ferté-sous-Jouarre, instead of

going towards Meaux, strong doubts sprang up in his mind. He did not comprehend that Marmont going to Ferté-sous-Jouarre in preference to Meaux must have had serious reasons for a movement that removed him still further from Paris, and that these reasons could be no other than the desire of joining Mortier as soon as possible; neither did he perceive that, allowing the two marshals the advantage of uniting their forces—an advantage which he could not contest with them—he ought to have thought of cutting them off from Paris, and for that purpose hastened himself to Meaux. This very natural thought did not occur to Blucher, and though he arrived at Jouarre at a very early hour, and might have had possession of Meaux before night, he lost the evening in trying to discover what he could not divine, under the pretext so often alleged by generals who do not know the value of time, of granting necessary repose to his troops.

On the next day—the 27th February—having at length comprehended that the two marshals, having combined their forces at Ferté-sous-Jouarre, must be naturally solicitous to reach Meaux, the direct route to Paris, he ordered Sacken to advance from the left on Meaux, and sent Kleist straight forward on Sammeron, to cross the Marne at that point by means of a portable bridge that he brought with him. Besides being desirous of intercepting the route to Paris on both banks of the Marne, he also wished to cross that river with the main body of his forces, and take up a stronger position on the other side, in case Napoleon, as was very probable, should leave the army of Bohemia and come in pursuit of that of Silesia.

But the two French marshals were more alert than Blucher, and whilst on the morning of the 27th he had scarcely fixed his plans, they were at that very moment marching towards Meaux, for the purpose of resuming communications with Paris, which the urgent necessity of effecting a union between their forces had obliged them to suspend for a while. Blucher did not estimate their combined forces, taking into account their labours and losses, at more than 14,000 men, excellent soldiers no doubt, but a small number to cut their way through 50,000 enemies, whom they might encounter on the route to Meaux. Happily they took measures to protect their movements with as much skill as promptitude.

The Marne, between Ferté-sous-Jouarre and Meaux, describes numerous windings, whose edges are bordered by the Paris route, like a tangent touching successively several circles. At Trilport the road touches one of these contours, crosses the Marne, and leads to Meaux. The two marshals set out before daybreak, in order to reach the bridge of Trilport, take possession of it, cross the Marne, and seize on Meaux. Moreover, wishing

also to take possession of the Paris route that runs along the right bank of the Marne, they had ordered General Vincent to cross to this bank by the bridge of Ferté-sous-Jouarre, and take up a position behind the Ourcq, which in the neighbourhood of Lizy approaches the Marne very closely, without, however, uniting with that river, and forms with it an almost continuous line of defence. Thus established behind the Marne and the Ourcq, with their right at Meaux and their left at Lizy, they might keep the enemy in check during three or four days, receive meanwhile reinforcements from Paris, and await, without incurring any great risk, the arrival of Napoleon, who would not fail to fly to their assistance as soon as he should have learned their position.

These excellent arrangements were as skilfully executed as conceived. On the morning of the 27th, before Blucher could discern their movements, the two marshals glided, so to speak, between the enemy and the Marne along the road that runs on the left bank tangent to the different windings of this river, crossed the bridge at Trilport, leaving the Ricard division to defend the bridge, and advanced to Meaux. Whilst Marshal Marmont, after crossing the Marne, arrived at Meaux by the right bank of the river, General Sacken arrived there by the left. Some Russian detachments had already entered the city at the south side, when the marshal charged them at the head of 200 men, drove them back and shut the gates. Meanwhile, General Vincent had crossed the Marne at Ferté-sous-Jouarre, and taken up his position at Lizy, behind the Ourcq.

The two marshals had thus succeeded with 14,000 men in evading 50,000, and Blucher, who ought to have captured both the one and the other, experienced the confusion of seeing them established safe and sound behind the Marne and the Ourcq; whilst the position of affairs, lately so perilous for them, was now about to become so for him. This movement being completed on the 27th February, the marshals sent Napoleon an account of what they had done; they also sent to Joseph, demanding all the reinforcements he could possibly spare from Paris. In fact, the question now was, to save the capital; and the resources Paris contained could not be more usefully employed than in being sent immediately to Meaux.

Napoleon, informed on the 25th of Blucher's movement towards the Marne, and knowing the presumptuous character of this general, was fully prepared for the imprudence he was about to commit, and resolved to make him pay dearly for his rashness.* Without losing a moment, he ordered Marshal

* The Duke de Ragusa, as usual, ignorant of Napoleon's motives, and judging his conduct very superficially, reproaches him for not having set out on the 27th, and makes it appear that he received intelligence of Blucher's

Victor, who was stationed between Troyes and Méry, to reconstruct the bridge of Méry on the Seine, and to advance to Plancy and cross the Aube at that point. He ordered Marshal Ney to march to Aubeterre, and cross the Aube at Arcis. His intention was to leave Troyes privately with 34,000 or 35,000 men, leaving about the same number before that city, throw himself on Blucher's rear, and force him back on the Marne, where the Marshals Marmont and Mortier would receive him at the point of the bayonet.

On the morning of the 26th, the former intelligence being confirmed, he despatched the remainder of the guard from Troyes, and resolved to set out next day himself to direct this new movement, which, if it succeeded, might put an end to the war.

In adopting this resolution, it would be necessary to leave before Troyes a force sufficient to awe Prince Schwarzenberg. Napoleon confided to the Marshals Oudinot and Macdonald and to General Gerard the task of defending the Aube, concealing at the same time his absence as long as possible. Marshal Oudinot had, besides the Rothenbourg division of the young guard, the Leval division, brought from Spain, half of the Boyer division, also brought from Spain, and Count de Valmy's cavalry; Marshal Macdonald had the 11th corps, with Milhaud's cavalry; General Gerard had the 2nd corps, recruited with the Paris reserve and the St. Germain cuirassiers. The entire amounted to little more than 30,000 men. Napoleon ordered them to overthrow all the enemy's posts beyond the Aube, and to occupy the course of this river strongly, both above and below Bar-sur-Aube. He particularly recommended that after his departure the soldiers should frequently shout *Vive l'Empereur*, in order that his absence might not be suspected.

He brought with him Marshal Victor, commanding the Boyer

movement on the 24th, and asserts that had he made a movement two days earlier, the destruction of the army of Silesia would have been inevitable. The correspondence gives a decisive reply to this reproach. Intelligence of Blucher's movement, which was sent to Sézanne on the 24th, did not reach Napoleon till the 25th, and on that very day he despatched Victor from Méry to Plancy, and Ney from Troyes to Aubeterre. Consequently there was not an hour lost. On the 26th, when Blucher's intention was fully evident, Napoleon continued this movement, but did not set out himself until the 27th, in order to give his troops time to advance. The news arrived on the 25th, and on the 27th his troops had reached Herbisse, beyond the Aube. It would therefore have been impossible to act with more rapidity, and when we consider what steadiness of judgment and vigour of character are needed to form instant resolutions during actual warfare, especially in a position so serious as that of Napoleon, a position where the first false movement might have caused his ruin, we cannot sufficiently admire the precision and vigour of conduct of a captain who, in an hour after having received intelligence, puts his troops en marche, and remains behind only to hide his projects longer from the enemy, and to give, whilst his troops are marching forward, orders that embrace all the armies and the government of a vast empire.

and Charpentier divisions of the young guard; Ney with the Meunier and Curial divisions of the young guard, and the 2nd brigade of the Boyer division, from Spain; Friant with the old guard; Druot with the artillery reserve; and lastly, from 9000 to 10,000 cavalry, belonging either to the guards or the dragoons of Spain; the entire amounting, as we have just said, to 35,000 men. By a union with the two marshals the total would be raised to 50,000.

Before leaving Troyes, Napoleon took, according to his custom, diverse measures relative to military and political administration. The conscription, instead of the decreed 600,000 men, had only yielded 120,000, and for some time past furnished none. The people profited by the shocks the imperial authority had received to disobey a law that was universally detested. Instead of from 4000 to 5000 conscripts that hitherto had arrived daily at Paris, and that were drafted hastily into the skeleton regiments of the guard or the line, there did not now arrive 1000. But it was quite different in the departments traversed by the enemy; there a patriotic fury raged, and numbers of young men were willing to enlist. Napoleon ordered a sort of levy en masse in the invaded provinces, under pretext of calling out in these departments the national guards for the defence of the country; but not wishing to leave these men in the regiments of the national guards, on which he set no great value, he ordered them to be drafted into the regiments of the line, with a promise of liberation as soon as the enemy should be driven beyond the frontier. He reiterated pressing entreaties that provisions should be sent to Nogent by the Seine, and besides, a pontoon train, without which all his movements would be as difficult as though he were in an enemy's country. To these orders he added an injunction, often addressed to his wife, his brother Joseph, the High Chancellor Cambacérès, and the war minister, not to be afraid, at least not to allow their fear to appear; to execute his instructions promptly and punctually, and then, as he was in the habit of saying, *to leave the rest to him,* promising, if they seconded his efforts, that he would soon drive the allies into the Rhine.

The commissioners appointed to negotiate the armistice, and who had been assembled since the 24th at Lusigny, had not ceased to discuss the limits that should separate the belligerent armies. Napoleon, on setting out, had enjoined M. de Flahaut to continue the negotiations, and even to yield different points, provided the fortress of Antwerp and the city of Chambéry were included in the line of demarcation. Though he did not expect any beneficial result from these discussions, yet he did not wish to close any way that led to negotiation. M. de Caulaincourt still advised him to give up a part of the Frankfort

bases, and asked him for a counter-proposition, which the plenipotentiaries at Chatillon earnestly demanded, conformably to the orders sent from Chaumont. Napoleon dictated a reply for these plenipotentiaries. M. de Caulaincourt was to say that the desired counter-propositions were being drawn up at headquarters, but that amidst so many multiplied military movements, it was not astonishing that the Emperor of the French, who was at the same time the head of the government and the head of the army, had not found time to complete such a work. He was meanwhile to declare that the project presented at Chatillon being not a treaty of peace but a capitulation, it would never be accepted; that France ought, even for the common good, to preserve her ancient position in Europe, and in order to do so she ought to receive an equivalent for the extension of territory acquired by Prussia, Russia, and Austria, at the expense of Poland, by Germany at the expense of the ecclesiastical States, by Austria at the expense of Venice, and by England at the expense of the Dutch and of the Indian princes; that consequently France ought to expand herself far beyond the limits of 1790; and that, moreover, she would never consent that the fate of the States she gave up should be decided without her sanction. In this way Napoleon hinted upon what bases he intended to negotiate, but without declaring explicitly what frontier line he wished to keep, which he was not disposed to do until he should have achieved new and decisive victories. He counselled the Duke of Vicence to propagate the belief that he was still at Troyes, busy in concentrating his resources there, and drawing up a treaty in reply to that of Chatillon. He also wished that the council of regency should examine the Chatillon propositions, and give an opinion on them. He flattered himself that all the members of the council would be unanimous in expressing their indignation.

Having despatched these various and serious affairs, Napoleon left Troyes secretly on the morning of the 27th February, crossed the Aube at Arcis, and following his columns closely, passed the night at Herbisse, at the house of a poor country priest, who could offer no other accommodation than what his humble vicarage afforded, but which he offered cordially, not alone to the emperor, but to his numerous staff. After a frugal and cheerful repast, they passed the night on chairs, tables, or on straw, calculating that the present movement in Blucher's rear would be as profitable as the former. Everything promised a similar result, and Napoleon might, without presumption, reckon upon it.

The next day, the 28th February, he continued his march. He could choose between two courses, either to follow Blucher through Sézanne and Ferté-sous-Jouarre to Meaux, or to ad-

vance directly through Fère-Champenoise to Chateau-Thierry. By taking this latter direction he secured the advantage of intercepting Blucher's most important communication, for he could cut him off at the same time from Chalons and Soissons, and separate him from Bulow and Wintzingerode. But there was more than one danger involved in this plan of operation: it would leave the Marshals Marmont and Mortier too long contending with Blucher before Meaux, it would abandon to the latter the principal route to Paris, and in short furnish him a line of retreat far better than that of Chalons or Soissons—we mean the route from Meaux to Provins, which would allow him to fall back, in case of danger, on Prince Schwarzenberg. To pursue Blucher by Sézanne, Ferté-Gaucher, and Ferté-sous-Jouarre, was therefore the safest proceeding, whether for the purpose of cutting him off from the highroad to Paris, or coming more quickly to the succour of the two marshals—in short, to inflict on him a punishment similar to that he had received at Montmirail and Champaubert; for, if Blucher made an effort to join Prince de Schwarzenberg on the Seine, Napoleon would anticipate him there. If he threw himself behind the Marne, to take a covered position there, he would be followed and hemmed in between the Marne and the Aisne, without any means of escape, precautions having been taken to defend Soissons. Thus Napoleon, in executing a bold manœuvre, chose at the same time the safest course, for he possessed the rare talent of not overstepping the line that separates daring courage from imprudence—in a word, he could be at the same time rash and cautious. Unhappily, it was only in war he combined these two antagonistic qualities.

He marched, therefore, on the morning of the 28th, with his 35,000 men, through Sézanne, on Ferté-Gaucher and Ferté-sous-Jouarre. Notwithstanding the rapidity of his movements, he was not able to reach Ferté-Gaucher that day, and passed the night between Sézanne and Ferté-Gaucher. The next day (the 1st of March) he slept at Jouarre, and reached Ferté-sous-Jouarre at an early hour on the 2nd. During Napoleon's march on the Marne, Blucher, who at length perceived the danger of his position, had not endeavoured to extricate himself with the celerity that common prudence would have dictated. He had at first wished to place the Marne between him and Napoleon, and crossed the river at Ferté-sous-Jouarre, which place had remained in his hands since the retreat of Marmont and Mortier. He destroyed the bridge of this town, and established himself on the Ourcq, to try and force the position of the two marshals, whilst Napoleon, checked by the Marne, would be obliged to remain a spectator. This was an imprudent calculation, for the Marne could not restrain

Napoleon more than thirty-six hours, and if to carry out these fruitless attempts Blucher lingered on the banks of the Ourcq, he ran the risk of being attacked in the rear and enclosed between the Marne and the Aisne in a truly perilous position. Things went on in this way; and whilst Napoleon was rapidly advancing, Blucher was losing his time in vain attempts on the line of the Ourcq. He had attempted to transport Kleist's corps across the Ourcq, but Marmont and Mortier, throwing themselves on Kleist, had forced him to repass the river with considerable loss. Whilst the two marshals thus held their position, Joseph sent them reinforcements consisting of 7000 foot soldiers and 1500 horse of the guards and line. These troops had been incorporated on the 1st of March, and on the 2nd, when it was known that Napoleon had arrived on the Marne, they were ready to receive orders.

Blucher, stationed beyond the Marne, and along the Ourcq, which he had not been able to force, found himself between the two marshals who defended the Ourcq, and Napoleon, who was preparing to cross the Marne. He had excellent reasons to expedite his movements, for the danger was every moment increasing. Nevertheless he persevered in his former plan, and lost the entire 2nd of March lingering along the line of the Ourcq, to try whether he could not fight the two marshals before the eyes of Napoleon, who could not cross the Marne. Having encountered a valiant resistance on every point of the Ourcq, he resolved to decamp on the morning of the 3rd, in order to draw nearer the Aisne, and join either Bulow, who was coming by Soissons, or Wintzingerode, who was coming by Reims. But he should now find himself between the Marne, that Napoleon was about to cross, and the Aisne, where the only bridge within his reach was that of Soissons, of which we were masters; besides, the country between the Marne and the Aisne, which he was about to traverse, was marshy and become almost impracticable in consequence of a sudden thaw. His position was consequently most alarming, thanks to his own imprudence and the profound calculations of his adversary.

During these proceedings, Napoleon having arrived at the banks of the Marne, was burning with impatience to cross. To effect this object he employed the marines of the guard, and such was their activity that the bridge was reconstructed during the night of the 2nd-3rd of March. The intelligence that arrived every moment was calculated to excite his impatience to the highest degree. The peasants who came from the other side of the Marne were glowing with patriotism, like all who had caught a sight of the enemy, and drew a dreary picture of the state of the Prussian army. In fact, this army, filled with recollections of Montmirail, of Chateau-Thierry, of Vauchamps,

and knowing that they were pursued by Napoleon, expected a terrible disaster. The state of the broken-up roads added to their alarm, and they foresaw that they should be obliged to abandon at least their cannon and baggage as soon as Napoleon should have crossed the slender barrier that separated him from them. All this was an inducement to the emperor not to lose time, and according to his wont, he did not lose it. Intelligence from Troyes was also another motive for expediting his movements. He learned that Prince Schwarzenberg having discovered the secret of his departure, had resumed offensive operations, and was again driving forward on Troyes and Nogent the marshals who had been left to guard the Aube. This circumstance, though it rendered despatch on his part imperative, troubled him little, for he felt confident that after discomfiting the army of Silesia, he would be able to fall back on the army of Bohemia and make it retreat faster than it had advanced. Suddenly, at sight of the complicated movements of his adversary, Napoleon conceived a great military idea, whose execution might involve the most important results. To fall immediately on Schwarzenberg after beating Blucher appeared to him a fatiguing movement that might not yield any decisive result. He devised another plan of operation. The intelligence he had received that Bulow and Wintzingerode's corps had arrived in line proved to him that the allies were strangely neglecting the blockade of the fortresses, and left them invested by forces as contemptible in number as in quality; it would therefore be possible to make use of the garrisons against the enemy, as they had made use of the blockading troops against us. He could thus turn to profit what, in his highly expressive language, he called "the dead forces." He consequently resolved to call out all the disposable troops in the fortresses, and form them into an active army, from which important services might be expected. Into the fortresses of Belgium, Luxemburg, Lorraine, and Alsace, conscripts had been thrown, who, drafted into the skeletons of old regiments, must have acquired a certain amount of military instruction during the two months and a half that the campaign had lasted. Having lately often led to battle conscripts who had been only fifteen days under drill, Napoleon might consider men who had been two months and a half enlisted, disciplined soldiers. Admitting these premises, it would be possible to draw from Lille, Antwerp, Ostend, Gorcum, and Bergen-op-Zoom, about 20,000 men, or at least 15,000. Double that number might be drawn from the fortresses of Luxemburg, Metz, Verdun, Thionville, Mayence, Strasburg, &c. If then, after overthrowing Blucher, Napoleon, who had about 50,000 men, could add to these 50,000 more in advancing

by Soissons, Laon, and Rethel on Verdun and Nancy, he would find himself at the head of 100,000 men in the rear of Prince Schwarzenberg, and without doubt the latter would not wait that opportunity to return from Paris to Besançon. At the first suspicion of such a project the commander-in-chief would retrace his steps, pursued by the exasperated peasantry of Burgundy, Champagne, and Lorraine, who, utterly cast down at first by the rapidity of the invasion, had afterwards exhibited sentiments of the purest patriotism. Schwarzenberg would thus arrive half vanquished, to fall hopelessly beneath Napoleon's sword. This daring project was certainly executable, for the men on whom he calculated existed, and the journey to collect them did not involve an expenditure of much labour or time. In fact, the distance from Soissons to Rethel, from Rethel to Verdun, from Verdun to Toul, was not greater than the army had already traversed in crossing alternately from Schwarzenberg to Blucher. Besides, two or three days more were of little consequence, when the bare announcement of the projected movement would have the effect of drawing the enemy from Paris to the frontiers, and freeing the capital. Thus the war might be terminated at once if fortune favoured the execution of the plan, for certainly Prince Schwarzenberg —whose numbers were already reduced to 90,000 men by the loss of the detachment sent to Laon—pursued by the peasantry of the provinces, could not resist an army of 100,000 men commanded by the emperor in person.

Napoleon therefore ordered General Maison to leave at Antwerp only a few seamen, the national guards, and the forces absolutely necessary to resist an enemy who did not think of making a regular attack; he was to do the same in all the fortresses in Flanders, and prepare to march on Mezières with what troops he could assemble. He gave similar orders to the governors of Mayence, Metz, and Strasburg. All were ordered to leave in the fortresses only those troops that were indispensably necessary, and supply the deficiency by the national guards; they were to summon the garrisons from the least important villages, and advance from Mayence and Strasburg to Metz, from Metz to Nancy, to join the main body. The small numbers that blockaded our fortresses could not prevent these combinations if the commanders of the garrisons acted with vigour. In any case, Napoleon, coming to their aid, would free those who might have encountered any serious obstacle. Trustworthy men were sent in disguise to carry these orders, which it was not difficult to despatch to their destination, for with the exception of Mayence, we had intelligence from all our fortresses, so incomplete was the blockade.

Full of this project, on which he founded most rational

hopes, Napoleon, after crossing the Marne on the night of the 2nd-3rd March, set out in pursuit of Blucher, whom it was necessary he should put hors de combat, or at least remove to a distance, in order to execute the plan he had just conceived. The reports of the morning all agreed in representing Blucher in the deepest embarrassment. In fact, he was driven back on the Aisne, which he could only cross at the bridge of Soissons, that belonged to us. He could certainly escape by a movement to the right, that would bring him towards Fère-en-Tardenois, and towards Reims, a movement that would afford him an opportunity of escape by remounting the Aisne, and crossing nearer the source, where there was a sufficiency of bridges, and where he would meet Bulow and Wintzingerode. But Napoleon was not a man to leave this resource to his adversary. For this purpose, after crossing the Marne, he remounted the river towards the source, by the highroad that leads from Ferté-sous-Jouarre to Chateau-Thierry. He had thus the double advantage of advancing faster, and of reaching the direct road from Chateau-Thierry to Soissons by Oulchy. Once on this road, he would outflank Blucher, and he was certain of taking possession of the only road open to the Prussian general, that of Reims.

Having arrived at Chateau-Thierry, Napoleon ceased to advance to the right, and marching directly on Soissons, he drove Blucher briskly back on Oulchy. At the same moment the Marshals Mortier and Marmont, having recrossed the Ourcq on our left, and debouched from Lizy and from May, set out in pursuit of the enemy. A sudden frost that occurred on the morning of the 3rd rendered Blucher's retreat less difficult. His danger, however, was not less great, for the road to Reims was about being closed against him. At Oulchy the Ourcq again makes its appearance, and Marmont had a sharp engagement at that place with Blucher's rearguard. He took or killed about 3000 of this rearguard, and forced the remainder to cross the Ourcq in disorder. The passage was thus assured on the morning of the next day for the Marshals Mortier and Marmont, who were advancing at the head of their combined troops. Another advantage was also obtained, it was that of occupying Fère-en-Tardenois with our extreme right, and cutting off the route to Reims. There remained to Blucher no other way of crossing the Aisne than at Soissons, of which we were masters. We had at length laid hold of our irreconcilable enemy, and were about to suffocate him in a brassy embrace.

Napoleon had brought up his vanguard as far as the village of Rocourt, whilst Marmont's troops were at Oulchy, and he that night slept at Bezu St. Germain, his mind filled with the highest and best founded hopes he had ever conceived.

In fact, on the next day — the 4th March — he set out, calculating on a decisive engagement during the day. Still fearing that Blucher might escape on the right, the emperor himself took up a position at Fismes, the only route leading to Reims that was still practicable, whilst Marmont and Mortier pushed forward on Soissons by Oulchy and Hartennes. Whatever course Blucher took, he would be forced to fight, with the Aisne at his back, and with 45,000 against 55,000 men. We had not been accustomed in this campaign to a superiority of numbers on our side, and Blucher would now inevitably be thrust into the Aisne. Whether he paused at Soissons and fought there, with the river in his rear, or reascended the Aisne, his position would be just the same. If he halted before Soissons, Napoleon, uniting his left with Marmont and Mortier, would fall on him within three or four hours; if he advanced along the Aisne, to reconstruct a bridge there, or make use of that of Berry-au-Bac, Napoleon could fall more directly on him from Fismes, and forming a combination with the two marshals, surprise him by a flank movement, and place him in the most critical position. Blucher's destruction was therefore inevitable, and what was to become of Bulow and Wintzingerode, who were hovering about the vicinity, waiting to join him? What would become of Schwarzenberg, left alone on the Paris route? The destiny of France was about to change, for whatever at a later period might become of the imperial dynasty (a secondary consideration in the present solemn crisis), victorious France would have preserved her natural frontiers. Every moment brought us fresh presages of victory. The greatest dejection prevailed amongst Blucher's troops, whilst ours were burning for battle. At every step the French fell in with waggons that had been abandoned, or with stragglers from the enemy's line. Eleven or twelve hundred of these unhappy creatures had fallen into our hands.

Suddenly Napoleon received the most unexpected and afflicting intelligence. Soissons, that was the key to the Aisne—Soissons, that he had taken especial care to provide with sufficient means of defence—Soissons had opened its gates to Blucher, and given up to him the passage of the Aisne. Who was it that had thus suddenly changed the face of things, and converted into a serious danger for us that which a few hours before had been an imminent peril for the enemy? Blucher, in fact, had not only escaped our pursuit, and stood protected by the Aisne, which, from having been an advantage for us, was now changed into an obstacle, but had also joined Bulow and Wintzingerode, and so raised the number of his troops to 100,000 men. Who then, we repeat, had been able to reverse our position and destroy our hopes? A weak-minded man, who, without

being either a traitor or a coward, or even a bad officer, had been terrified by the threats of the adverse generals, and had delivered up Soissons. We shall now relate how this event had occurred, the most fatal in the annals of our history, next to that which a year later occurred between Wavre and Waterloo.

Soissons had once fallen into the hands of the allies, in consequence of the death of General Rusca, and had been wrested from them by Marshal Mortier when the latter had been sent in pursuit of the Generals Sacken and d'York. In obedience to the orders of Napoleon, who felt all the importance of Soissons in the present circumstances, Marshal Mortier had provided, by every means in his power, for the preservation of this post. The place, which had long been neglected, was not in a state to offer great resistance to the enemy; but with artillery and provisions, of which there was no deficiency, and certain sacrifices that circumstances authorised, we could have held the place for a few days, and thus remained masters of the passage of the Aisne. According to written instructions, that Napoleon had revised, and which had been sent to Soissons, the buildings in the suburbs were to be burned, because they impeded the defence; then the bridge of Aisne was to be undermined, so that it might be blown up, should circumstances become desperate—a measure that would at least deprive the enemy of the bridge, should the French not be able to hold it. The Poles lately withdrawn from Sedan had been sent to garrison the place, Napoleon not being very well pleased with them at the time. It was true that to their despair at seeing their country devastated was added the affliction of profound personal misery, and the noble Polish troops of former times were now reduced to 3000 or 4000 men, ill armed and ill equipped. However, seeing the extreme peril of France, every one amongst them who could hold a sword or a musket had offered to serve. A thousand cavalry soldiers, under General Pac, had joined the imperial guard, and 1000 foot soldiers had assembled at Soissons. These were to be reinforced by 2000 national guards. The governor of the town was General Moreau (no relation of the celebrated Moreau), who had not the reputation of being a bad officer. Unfortunately, to him was confided the worst defended part of the town.

On the 2nd and 3rd March two masses of the enemy's soldiers appeared in sight, the one advancing along the right, the other along the left bank of the Aisne. It was Bulow, who, coming from Belgium, advanced towards Soissons along the right bank of the river, and Wintzingerode, who, coming from Luxemburg, through Reims, approached by the left bank. Both felt the great importance, both to Blucher and themselves, of the post they were about to attack. In fact, Soissons was the only issue by which Blucher could cross the barrier of the

Aisne; and for the others, it was the only means of delivery from an isolation that became every moment more perilous. Should they not succeed in seizing this bridge, they would be obliged to fall back, the one along the right bank of the Aisne, the other along the left, to effect a junction higher up, and leave Blucher alone between the Aisne and Napoleon. Thus, after having on the 2nd March cannonaded the town during the entire day without any great result, on the 3rd they used the strongest threats to General Moreau, trying to intimidate him by threatening to put the entire garrison to the sword.

The place could not resist more than two or three days; for attacked by 50,000 men, and garrisoned only by 10,000, with the defences in a bad condition, it would be impossible to resist even for a short time. The 2000 national guards destined to join the Poles had not arrived; the houses in the suburbs that impeded the defence had not been destroyed; the bridge had not been mined, which was the governor's fault. These circumstances were all adverse; but the Poles, who were tried soldiers, offered to hold out to the last extremity; besides, the report of cannon was already heard in the direction of the Marne, which indicated the near approach of Napoleon, and proved the importance of the post, a fact which the earnest efforts of the enemy would alone be sufficient to prove. In ordinary circumstances, to surrender would have been very natural, for the lives of a garrison ought always to be saved when to sacrifice them can be of no avail; but under the circumstances we are now considering, it became a sacred duty to await the attack of the assailants, and perish even to the last man rather than yield. An engineer officer, Lieutenant-Colonel St. Hillier, pointed out the duty and possibility of resistance, at least during twenty-four hours. Nevertheless, General Moreau, shaken by the threats addressed to the garrison, consented to give up the place on the 3rd March, and only employed one day discussing the conditions. He wished to depart with his artillery. Count Woronzoff, who was present, said in Russian to one of his generals—"Let him take his artillery if he wishes, and mine too, and allow us to cross the Aisne." Our enemies were very compliant, and in according to General Moreau a capitulation in appearance the most honourable, they made him consummate an act that nearly cost him his life, that deprived Napoleon of his empire, and France of her glory. On the evening of the 3rd, Bulow and Wintzingerode shook hands on the Aisne, and thus on the 4th, Blucher found a gate open, which ought to have been closed, and received a reinforcement that raised his army to 100,000 men, besides being saved in the twinkling of an eye from the consequences

of his own faults and the terrible fate Napoleon had prepared for him.

Some historians, apologists of Blucher, have asserted that the danger he incurred was not so great as Napoleon had been pleased to say, for Blucher might have been reinforced at least by Wintzingerode, who, coming from Reims, was on the left bank of the Aisne, and this junction would have raised the Prussian army to 70,000 men against 55,000. In the first place, no numerical force could have remedied Blucher's false position, for, arriving on the 4th at Soissons, when Napoleon was the same day at Fismes, he would have been obliged either to cross the Aisne that lay before him, by help of temporary bridges, or he should have reascended the banks of the river a distance of ten leagues with the French army on his flank. The advantage of 70,000 men against 55,000, a numerical difference which at that time was not new to us, was nothing in comparison to so false a military position. Besides, it is almost certain that Wintzingerode, not being able to effect a junction with Bulow on the 3rd, would have retraced his steps on the 4th, to recross the Aisne twelve or fifteen leagues higher up, that is to say, at Berry-au-Bac. Blucher would therefore have found himself during an entire day isolated between Napoleon and the fortified post of Soissons.

The disaster was therefore as certain as anything could be in war; and Napoleon, on learning that Soissons had opened its gates to the enemy, was overwhelmed with grief; for the danger that had lately menaced Blucher was now turned against him. Blucher, in fact, was now at the head of 100,000 men, and the Aisne, which lately threatened his destruction, was become his strongest defence. As to us, we should be obliged either to cross the Aisne with 50,000 men in sight of 100,000, which would be an act of great temerity, or return to the Seine, without knowing what to do there; for how could the French army face that of Bohemia without having conquered the army of Silesia. We can easily understand that Napoleon wrote the following letter to the war minister:—

"FISMES, *5th March* 1814.

"The enemy was in the greatest embarrassment, and we were hoping to gather on this very day the fruits of some days' labour, when the treason or the stupidity of the commander of Soissons delivered that place to the enemy.

"On the 3rd, at noon, he marched out, with the honours of war, and brought with him four pieces of cannon. Let this wretch be arrested, as well as all the members of his war council; let him be impeached before a military commission composed of generals, and for God's sake act so that they may be all shot within twenty-four hours on the Place de Grève. It is time to make examples. Let the

cause of the sentence be fully explained, printed, and distributed in every direction. I am obliged to throw a temporary bridge across the Aisne; this causes me a loss of thirty-six hours, and annoys me dreadfully."

And yet Napoleon only knew part of the truth, for he was not aware that Blucher's force now doubled his in number. All he knew was that Blucher had eluded his grasp, and that to overtake he must pursue him beyond the Aisne. The misfortune was already sufficiently great, and of a nature to disconcert any one but himself. If, after such a discomfiture, Napoleon had been embarrassed and had lost a day or two devising new plans, we ought not to be astonished, if we reflect on the conduct of the greater number of commanders.* But it was not so with him. Though the Aisne was now to Blucher as great an advantage as it had lately been a disadvantage, though he was reinforced in a proportion of which we had no idea, Napoleon did not renounce pursuing him; he wished to fight him hand to hand, for it would be impossible without having beaten Blucher to fall on Schwarzenberg. In fact, he would soon find himself trapped between Blucher, who was in close pursuit, and Schwarzenberg, who would have conquered the marshals left to guard the Aube; this would be a fearful and untenable position. It was incumbent on Napoleon, at any risk—should he even be defeated in the attempt, for he was certain of a still greater defeat by not making the effort—it was incumbent, we say, on Napoleon to pursue Blucher beyond the Aisne, and to set out instantly before the enemy should have thought of rendering the bridges impracticable. Napoleon gave his orders on the morning of the 5th, immediately after receiving the intelligence that grieved him so deeply.

Napoleon had during the night sent General Corbineau to Reims to seize the place—the most important point of communication with the Ardennes—and make himself master of the troops and provisions that Wintzingerode must necessarily have left behind. Wishing to secure the passage of the Aisne,

* General Koch says, Chapter XIV.: "The emperor, whose plan was disconcerted by so unexpected an event, remained an entire day in uncertainty, and manifested his embarrassment by the divergent and daring nature of the operations he undertook." This is a very excusable error in one who has read neither the orders nor the correspondence of Napoleon. He was certainly very much annoyed, but not disconcerted, as we shall see; and he ordered, without losing an hour, the new arrangements that circumstances required. The cause of General Koch's error is, he supposes, that the reduction of Soissons having taken place on the 3rd, Napoleon must have known it on the 4th, on account of his proximity. But the correspondence proves that he did not know it until the morning of the 5th, because the Generals Mortier and Marmont did not know it till the evening of the 4th. The orders for the passage of the Aisne were given on the morning of the 5th; there was therefore neither hesitation nor loss of time, which, under the circumstances, is certainly a matter of astonishment.

which was the essential object of the moment, Napoleon had ordered General Nansouty, with the cavalry of the guard, to advance to the bridge of Berry-au-Bac, built in stone, and over which was the highroad from Reims to Laon. He also ordered a detachment of cavalry to advance on Maisy, situate on our left, and throw a temporary bridge across at that point; he at the same time ordered Marshal Mortier to repair without delay to Braisne, to prepare other means of crossing the river at Pontarcy. His intention was to have three bridges on the Aisne, that he should not be forced to debouch in sight of Blucher, which might render the operation impossible. Undoubtedly, had the vigilance of the enemy equalled his, the French would have found the 100,000 men of the army of Silesia behind the presumed point of passage; and opposed by such a force, 50,000 men, however brave they might be, could not have crossed the Aisne. But it may safely be said, that by not losing time, however little remains, we shall arrive soon enough to disconcert the precautions of our enemies. Napoleon, who had learned from long experience how great in general is the carelessness of commanders, did not despair of finding the Aisne ill guarded, and of being able to effect the passage without striking a blow.

In effect, whilst that on his right General Corbineau entered Reims and seized 2000 of Wintzingerode's men and a quantity of baggage, General Nansouty, with the cavalry of the guard and the Poles under General Pac, met Wintzingerode's Cossacks in front of the bridge of Berry-au-Bac, charged full gallop, overthrew them, and crossed the bridge close in their rear, spite of some light infantry left to guard it. The rapid conquest of this stone bridge rendered an attempt on the others unnecessary, for the main body of the enemy being still at a distance, the French were able to debouch immediately, and Napoleon made every exertion during the night of the 5th-6th, as well as during the afternoon of the 6th, to make his troops defile by Berry-au-Bac, in order to take up a position on the right bank of the river before Blucher could oppose his intention. "It is a slight benefit," said Napoleon, on learning this success, "in compensation for a great ill."

It was not a slight benefit, if, transported beyond the Aisne, he could gain a victory; but it would be difficult to gain a victory, Blucher having 100,000 of the best of the allied troops, whilst we had only 55,000 men, of which two-thirds were half-clothed, undrilled conscripts, but who participated in the heroic despair of our officers, and fought with unexampled devotedness. But Napoleon was no longer in a position to count his enemies; he was obliged at all risks to fight, for to fall back on Schwarzenberg without having conquered Blucher would be to

induce the latter to pursue him, and thus expose himself to destruction, hemmed in between the two allied generals. As to the project of marching on to the fortresses to draw out the garrisons, it was equally impracticable before having beaten Blucher, for otherwise the French would have him close on their track, following them everywhere, and that so nearly that they could not take a step unobserved by this troublesome adversary. To fight was therefore obligatory, no matter how great the number of enemies, or how vast the local difficulties we might have to encounter.

Blucher was very much displeased at Wintzingerode's negligence in guarding the bridge of Berry-au-Bac, but he ought only to have blamed himself, for nothing is done correctly where the commander-in-chief does not oversee the work in person. He, however, dissimulated his annoyance. Wintzingerode commanded the Russians, and it was necessary to act cautiously with haughty and susceptible allies; besides, he was still master of a very strong position, easily defended, and from which he intended to resist the threatened approaching attacks of Napoleon.

After passing the Aisne at Berry-au-Bac, following the high-road from Reims to Laon, we have on the right vast tracts slightly undulated, whilst on the left we skirt the foot of the Craonne heights, then crossing some wooded hillocks, we descend by Festieux into a humid plain, in the midst of which suddenly appears the city of Laon, built on an isolated peak, and surrounded by high and antique walls. The heights of Craonne, which we see to the left after crossing the bridge of Berry-au-Bac, are only the extremity of a lengthy plateau that borders the Aisne as far as the environs of Soissons, and forms on one side the bank of the Aisne, on the other that of the Lette, a little river, alternately wooded and marshy, running parallel to the Aisne, and communicating by several valleys with the plain of Laon.

It was on this plateau of Craonne, which is several leagues in length, and which juts out like a species of promontory after we have passed the bridge of Berry-au-Bac, that Blucher had taken up a position with his army and the 50,000 men that had joined him. Each commander had naturally taken his station according to the direction from which he had advanced. Wintzingerode having come by Reims, had advanced to the heights of Craonne by Berry-au-Bac, whilst Bulow having journeyed by Fère and Soissons, had marched between Soissons and Laon. Blucher, with Sacken, d'York, Kleist, Langeron, having crossed the Aisne at Soissons, had reascended the banks of the river, and found themselves, part on the plateau of Craonne, part on the borders of the Lette, between the Lette and Laon.

On the morning of the 6th, Napoleon having effected the

passage of the Aisne, wished to try the enemy's position, and ordered a brisk attack on the heights of Craonne. The town of Craonne was first carried, but not without great labour and loss of blood. Then Ney and Victor, entering a valley between the abbey of Vauclerç on the left and the château of Bôve on the right, endeavoured to seize the heights where the Lette rises. They attacked the position with the determination to make themselves masters of it. But after losing several hundred men, they perceived the position could only be carried by a serious attack, that is to say, by a regular engagement. Instead of uselessly shedding precious blood, they thought it better to pause until they should come to a decisive resolution. Ney and Victor encamped at the foot of the heights. The first division of the old guard, under Mortier, took up a position at Corbeny; the cavalry of the old guard were stationed at Craonne and in the environs. The second division of the old guard passed the night in the rear of Berry-au-Bac, a little on this side of the Aisne, at Cormicy. Marmont was en route for this point, to form the rearguard of the army, and flank it during the grave operations that were about to be undertaken.

It had become necessary, as we have already said, to fight a battle, however doubtful the result might be, in consequence of the numerical strength and the position of the enemy, for without having conquered Blucher, Napoleon could neither fall back on Schwarzenberg nor seek the garrisons on the frontier. But the plan of battle gave rise to more than one question. To make a direct attack on the plateau of Craonne, which runs to a length of several leagues between the Aisne and the Lette, in order to thrust back the enemy on the Lette, and from the Lette into the plain of Laon, would be to grapple at once with the worst difficulties the case presented: it would be, as the proverb says, *to take the bull by the horns.* There was a means that seemed less difficult: it was, instead of pausing on the left and giving battle there, to defile to the right, follow the high-road from Reims to Laon, by Corbeny and Festieux, and descend into the plain of Laon, where probably, descending en masse, we might drive the enemy back on the Laon. But besides that, there was more than one obstacle to surmount on this route: the road to Paris would be by this movement left unprotected, and the enemy, being masters of Soissons, would be able, conquered or victors, to return to the Marne and the Seine, join Schwarzenberg, and march on Paris with 200,000 men. Undoubtedly the same thing would happen, did Napoleon, as he intended, advance to the frontiers to call out the garrisons; but he did not think of executing this project until he should have weakened Blucher by a great defeat, after having seriously shaken the moral strength of the allies, and revived in a proportionate

degree the courage of the Parisians and of the army. It would therefore be necessary to attack Blucher in such a way as to keep up a communication, on one hand with Soissons, and on the other with Laon (an important consideration that military critics have not taken into account), and therefore there remained but one means, which was to ascend the plateau of Craonne on our left, and to make this—our first success—our first aggressive act against Blucher. Once arrived on the plateau, a road lay before us that leads to Soissons. We could follow this route, and by an effort of our right wing, throw our enemy on the Lette; then by a second effort, force them into the plain of Laon; and if we ultimately succeeded in depriving them of Laon, we should have terminated the series of operations against Blucher in the most decisive and desirable manner. Napoleon could certainly have adopted a middle course, as, for example, not attempting to carry the plateau of Craonne, not advancing along the route from Reims to Laon, but effecting a passage between both by means of a ravine that opened into the valley of the Lette, and thus advance in close column into this valley, having on the left the heights of Craonne, on the right those of Bôve. But to effect this movement, it would be necessary to pass through a narrow gorge, in the midst of woody and marshy villages, where we should run the risk of seeing the enemy rush upon us from the heights that border the Lette on all sides; we should have needed veteran soldiers, coolly intrepid, to venture into this cut-throat pass.

The carrying of the plateau on the left by a sudden effort was better suited to our young impetuous troops, supported by two divisions of the old guard; and besides, if the position was strong, there was the advantage of having to do only with a wing of the allies, separated from the remainder of the army by so many obstacles that succours could not easily be brought up.

Napoleon decided that his left wing should attack the Craonne plateau. On this plateau was stationed the entire infantry of Wintzingerode, at that moment under the command of Count Woronzoff; the entire of Sacken's corps, with the Langeron in reserve; making in all 50,000 men, well provided with artillery. Blucher, judging by the attempts of the previous evening and the direction of our movements, which he could easily discern from the heights he occupied, had divined that we intended to attack the Craonne plateau, and by the advice of M. de Muffling, quartermaster-general of the army of Silesia, he had resolved to form nearly the entire of his cavalry into a single mass, make them advance along the highroad from Laon to Reims, into the open country, and precipitate them, to the number of 12,000 or 15,000 horse, on our right flank and our rear. If he succeeded, he would cut us off from Berry-au-Bac, and then throw

us into the Aisne. The combination might involve grave consequences for us; but to produce such a result two events must occur—we must fail in our attempt to carry the plateau, and the second division of the old guard, as well as Marmont's corps, must be broken by the enemy's cavalry; it was not very probable that either event would take place.

This cavalry expedition was confided to Wintzingerode, who was looked upon amongst the allies as the most alert of their vanguard officers; and it was on this account he had left his cavalry and light infantry to Count Woronzoff. Almost the entire of the allied cavalry were to advance on the Lette, through the woody country that forms the two banks of this little river, and having crossed the Lette, they were, after making a long detour, to remain en masse on the highroad from Laon to Reims. Kleist was to support Wintzingerode with his infantry, the d'York cavalry was to watch the two banks of the Lette, Bulow was ordered to guard the Laon, whilst Woronzoff, Sacken, and Langeron were to defend to the last extremity the Craonne plateau.

On the morning of the 7th March, Napoleon determined on his plan of attack. We have said that the plateau of Craonne consisted of a succession of flat-topped heights, extending between the Aisne and the Lette, which they separate, and reaching the environs of Soissons. It was the most salient part of this plateau, forming, as we have just seen, a kind of promontory in the midst of the plain of Craonne, that was to be attacked. Had it been necessary to escalade this plateau at one stretch, the task would have been too difficult. There was what might be called a first step: this was the little plateau of Craonne, rising above Craonnelle, a point fortunately occupied by our troops since the previous evening. This first step would serve as a point de depart, by which we could ascend more easily to the main plateau. In order to render the operation less destructive, Napoleon resolved to second it by two flank attacks —a movement favoured by the nature of the ground. Two ravines descended from the plateau: one, that of Oulches, situated on our left, reached the Aisne; the other, that of Vauclerc, situated on our right, opened into the valley of the Lette, in the midst of which stands the celebrated abbey of Vauclerc. The two ravines abut, one on the right, the other on the left, on the flanks of the plateau, at a place called the ferme d'Heurtebise, and offered facilities for attacking in the rear the troops that defended the principal position. Ney, with his two divisions of the young guard, supported by a portion of Nansouty's cavalry, was to enter into the valley of Oulches, whilst Victor, with the two divisions of the young guard, passing through that of Vauclerc, was to debouch on the plateau, in the direction of the ferme d'Heurtebise, and in proximity to Ney. Napoleon,

in the centre, with the old guard, the artillery reserve, and the bulk of the cavalry, had taken up his position on the little plateau of Craonne, ready to command an attack on the great plateau when the movement of his wings would render it possible. At the same time, Marmont was coming from Berry-au-Bac to protect our rear. All our troops having been obliged to defile in succession by the single bridge of Berry-au-Bac, the greater part of our artillery was left behind—a circumstance very much to be regretted in sight of an enemy who had assembled in front of his position a considerable number of cannon.

At ten in the morning Napoleon gave the signal for attack. Victor on the right advanced into the valley of Vauclerc, Ney on the left into that of Oulches. Victor, with a brigade of the Boyer division, advanced into the park of Vauclerc, where he found Woronzoff's infantry, in a strong position, and protected by a numerous artillery, firing from the summit of the plateau. After sustaining considerable losses, Victor made himself master of the park of Vauclerc. Above him, on the side of the hill, rose houses and gardens in tiers. The enemy had placed reserves here, that were to fall on the Boyer division, but the movement was executed too late. This division, solidly established in the buildings and gardens of the abbey, did not yield the post they had conquered. The enemy poured on them a murderous fire from their howitzers, and set in flames the buildings where they were lodged; but spite the conflagration they held their position.

Meanwhile was heard from the other side of the plateau, in the valley of Oulches, the cannon of Ney, who was opposed by Sacken, in his attempt to carry the ferme d'Heurtebise. The plateau being narrowed at this point, there was very little space between the extremity of the ravine of Oulches and that of Vauclerc, so that the two marshals were fighting in close proximity to one another. Ney had entered the valley of Oulches with his two divisions and Nansouty's cavalry. He had formed his cavalry into two columns, and had advanced under a fearful discharge of grape, for the Russians stationed large quantities of artillery at every outlet. The soldiers of Ney, young and enthusiastic, supported this fire bravely, and reached the confines of the plateau; but having arrived there, they were met by Sacken's infantry, who received them with a sharp fire of musketry, and drove them back to the bottom of the ravine. However, the fate of the war depended on the result of this battle, and Ney did not wish that the result should be determined by the bad conduct of troops under his command. Undiscouraged, he rallied his soldiers at the bottom of the ravine; with that soul-stirring warmth they never resisted, he spoke to them, revived their drooping courage, and conceived the design of forming them into one column, and leading them

to the charge at a running pace, so that the enemy should not have time to use their muskets. The soldiers form in column, with the resolution either to conquer or perish; they advance through the ravine, and having reached the extremity, dash forward, the marshal at their head, under a hail of balls; with the rapidity of lightning they fall on Sacken's infantry, that, taken by surprise, cannot sustain the shock, and are obliged to fall back. The infantry, thus disconcerted, retrogrades to a little hamlet called Paissy, leaving to Ney's two divisions sufficient space to deploy. Whilst Ney's left establish themselves on the plateau, his right fall on the farm of Heurtebise; enter, spite the enemy's resistance, and kill all who occupy the place. After some moments Sacken's infantry, having recovered their first emotion, endeavour to regain the place they had lost; but Ney's soldiers, now enjoying equal advantages of position, are determined not to yield the border of the plateau so dearly purchased; both sides fire nearly *à bout portant.* Victor, encouraged by Ney's success, has no idea of doing less himself. The Boyer division, after seizing the abbey of Vauclerc, wished to debouch on the plateau, and established themselves with the Charpentier division on the borders of a little wood that extends from the abbey of Vauclerc to the hamlet of Ailles. Having taken up a position there, they supported unflinchingly the fire of sixty pieces of cannon. These two flank attacks having freed the centre, Napoleon, at the head of the old guard, ascended the plateau, almost without striking a blow, and took up a position opposite the farm of Heurtebise. He thus formed a line connecting Ney's attack with that of Victor. The delay of our artillery left us exposed to the fire of the enemy's numerous cannon. To compensate for this disadvantage, Napoleon sent four of Druot's batteries, that immediately deployed between Ney and Victor. The fire was then less unequal, but still terribly destructive, and though exposed to a shower of bullets and grape, the Charpentier and Boyer divisions kept their post with unshaken firmness.

On the left, in the centre, on the right, we had made good our footing on the plateau, but this was not enough; it was necessary to keep the place, to extend our lines, and drive off the enemy. The moment had come when the cavalry ought to sustain the infantry, for beyond the farm of Heurtebise the ground opens out. Nansouty's cavalry, having followed Ney through the ravine of Oulches, and having debouched with him on the plateau, pass between the intervals of his battalions, and rush on the enemy—the Polish lancers and horse chasseurs at the head, the grenadiers in reserve. These brave horsemen, finding here space to deploy, advance in full gallop, cut their way through several Russian squares, force them back on the

hamlet of Paissy, whence it is only a step to drive them into a ravine parallel to that of Oulches, and leading to the Aisne; but in falling back the Russian infantry unmask a line of artillery, that pours grape on our cavalry, and stops their advance. They are obliged to return in order to avoid this destructive fire, and are pursued by twelve Russian squadrons. The latter in their turn charge with such impetuosity that they outride the horse grenadiers of the guard, who had remained in the second line. At sight of this sudden storm of cavalry, Ney's young soldiers lose their presence of mind, and fly towards the ravine of Oulches, whence they had so bravely advanced to the conquest of the plateau. It was in vain that Ney, throwing himself into the midst of them, appealed with his strong voice and energetic gestures; they continued to flee, seized with inexplicable terror, a phenomenon not unfrequent with young troops, whose susceptibility renders them as prompt to retreat as to attack. Napoleon, stationed a little in the rear, watching over the vicissitudes of the battle, sends Grouchy, with the remainder of the cavalry, to fill the void just made in the line of battle, and extend a veil, which, hiding the scene from our fugitives, might allow them to recover their presence of mind. Grouchy arrives, occupies the appointed place, and is about to charge, when he falls wounded from his horse. Deprived of their leader, our cavalry remain motionless. Still, however, they protect Ney's efforts to rally his infantry. Towards our right, Victor, at the head of the Boyer and Charpentier divisions, resolutely maintains his position on the confines of the wood of Ailles; but being severely wounded, General Charpentier takes his place. Napoleon, fearing that his wings, which could hardly keep their position on the confines of the plateau, might ultimately yield, sent forward a division of the old guard to deploy between them. These old soldiers advance with a determined step between our two wings, whilst at the same moment twenty-four pieces of artillery, so long expected, arrive. This remedies our inferiority in artillery, and it is time, for Druot's cannon are nearly all dismounted. These twenty-four pieces of artillery, formed into a battery between the troops of Ney and Victor, soon commence to pour forth their fiery torrents on the Russians, causing them considerable loss. Sacken's and Woronzoff's infantry, after resisting some time, yield in their turn, under repeated discharges of grape; they retreat, and leave us in possession of the ground. A simultaneous thrill runs from one end of our battle-line to the other; our soldiers wish to pursue the enemy. Victor's troops, making a last effort, seize the village of Ailles, and establish themselves definitely on the right of the army. Ney's troops do not remain behind,

and our entire line crosses the plateau, which sometimes widens, sometimes narrows, and drives back Sacken's and Woronzoff's infantry on that of Langeron. The Russian cavalry endeavour in vain to make a charge to cover this retreat; our chasseurs and horse grenadiers dash forward and repulse them. Having taken refuge behind the infantry, they form, and try to return to the charge; our dragoons drive them back again. Our troops thus traverse victoriously the summit of the plateau; their left on the Aisne, their right on the Lette, overtopping by some hundred feet the beds of these two rivers, and driving before them the 50,000 men of Sacken, Woronzoff, and Langeron. The pursuit continues in this fashion during a space of two leagues, that is to say, as far as Filain, and as the enemy appeared at this place desirous of descending into the valley of the Lette, our left, animated by a sudden reactionary emotion, briskly urge their descent. Our artillery, compensating for their tardy arrival, pursue the enemy to the entrance of the valley and cover them with grape, until they find a shelter in the woody depths of the bed of the Lette.

Night was approaching; and nothing indicated that we need fear an attack on our flanks or our rear. In fact, this irruption of Wintzingerode's 15,000 horse, a project of which Napoleon was not aware, but whose possibility he admitted, and against which he had taken his precautions by leaving a division of the old guard and Marmont's corps at the foot of the Craonne heights, had not yet been executed at the close of the day. Notwithstanding the solicitations of Blucher, who attached much importance to this combination, Wintzingerode's cavalry, having entered the valley of the Lette in the midst of a woody and marshy country, where they embarrassed the infantry of Kleist, and were in turn embarrassed by them, had not reached Festieux until very late in the day, and had not dared at that hour to attempt an enterprise that presented dangers as well as advantages. Blucher was therefore obliged to content himself for that day with the loss of the plateau of Craonne.

Such was this bloody battle of Craonne, consisting of the conquest of an elevated plateau defended by 50,000 men and a numerous artillery, and attacked by 30,000 with a few cannon. The tenacity on the one side, and the intrepidity on the other, had been admirable; and on our side, the Boyer and Charpentier divisions had displayed, besides intrepidity, extraordinary firmness under fire. Ney had been, as usual, one of the heroes of the day. The Russians had lost from 6000 to 7000 men, and no one will be surprised to learn that, debouching under a terrible fire, we had lost from 7000 to 8000. Our loss would have been greater, had not our artillery—delayed, not by any fault of theirs, but by the distance—come at length, and com-

pensated by its ravages those we had sustained. Could we next day draw any useful consequences from this noble effort made by our army? Had the blood of our brave soldiers flowed for the benefit of France? Such was the question to be resolved within the forty-eight hours, and whose solution, alas, did not depend on the genius of Napoleon, for had it depended on that, it would not have been one moment doubtful.

Napoleon, though satisfied with this first result, and touched by the devotedness of his troops, was deeply absorbed in thought next day, but his determination to fight, resulting from the necessity of conquering Blucher before falling back on Schwarzenberg, was still the same. He only deliberated on one point, that was to decide, now that he was master of the plateau of Craonne, by which side he should descend into the plain of Laon. But here again a necessity, almost as absolute as that of fighting, obliged him to march by the chaussée of Soissons to Laon, and this was the necessity of placing himself between these two cities, in order to occupy the Paris route. Unfortunately this chaussée presented much greater difficulties than that of Reims, in advancing to the plain of Laon. Having arrived at that part of the plateau that lies between Aizy and Filain, we should be obliged to turn to the right, descend into the valley of the Lette, between Chavignon and Urcel, and enter a defile, bordered on the left by wooded heights, and on the right by the stream Ardon, that runs from Laon, and is bordered by marshy prairies. We meet on the way, successively, the villages of Etouvelles and Chivy, and debouch afterwards by the chaussée of Soissons into the plain of Laon. To lead the entire army into this narrow defile, where there was only the breadth of the chaussée to manœuvre, was extremely dangerous. In fact, the enemy, occupying strongly the villages of Etouvelles and Chivy, could bring us to a full stop. However, we had no choice of operations, for to proceed to the right and take the highroad from Reims to Laon, which crosses the Aisne at Berry-au-Bac, would be leaving the highroad to Soissons unprotected, and had Napoleon been from the beginning satisfied to take the route to Reims, it would not have been worth while to lose 7000 men to conquer the plateau of Craonne. The serious necessity of remaining in the vicinity of Soissons having outweighed every other consideration in the first battle, ought to be of equal importance in the second. Consequently, Napoleon, who, on the evening of the 7th, had bivouacked on the plateau, took up a position on the 8th between Ange-Gardien and Chavignon, at the entrance to the defile that leads to the plain of Laon. This day he gave his troops that they might rest, and that Marshal Marmont might have time to fall into line.

Napoleon wished to make use of Marmont's troops to remedy

as much as possible the inconvenience of the position in which he was obliged to place himself. Marshal Marmont had just received from Paris a fresh division of reserve, composed, like those commanded by General Gerard, of battalions of the line, hastily formed in the depôts. This division comprised 4000 conscripts, drilled, like the others, during fifteen or twenty days, but led by officers whose courage was raised to the highest pitch by the danger of France and the threatened honour of our arms. This division, placed under the orders of the Duke of Padua, raised Marmont's troops to 12,000 or 13,000 men, and increased the total of Napoleon's forces to 48,000 or 50,000, deducting the losses incurred at the battle of Craonne. Napoleon resolved to send the Duke of Ragusa's corps along the route that he did not wish to take himself—that leading from Reims to Laon. This corps, passing through Festieux, and having no great difficulties to conquer, would take up a position on our right in the plain of Laon, and by attracting the attention of the enemy, would facilitate to our principal column the passage of the defile between Etouvelles and Chivy. Undoubtedly there was danger, even with this precaution, for Napoleon debouching on the left through a narrow defile, and Marmont debouching unprotected on the right into the plain of Laon, at a distance of three leagues, they might be separately overwhelmed without being able to render each other any assistance. But what was to be done? On what side was there not danger, and even greater danger than that they were braving? It was not possible, in fact, to turn away from Blucher without having beaten him; it was not possible to follow en masse the route from Reims without leaving that of Soissons unprotected, which was the highroad to Paris; therefore debouching by the defile from Etouvelles to Chivy was the result of a concatenation of necessities to which the emperor was obliged to submit, diminishing as best he could the difficulties of the operation. There was evidently a better chance of forcing the defile, if we aided the attack on the left by an accessory demonstration on the right. Besides, the obstacle once overcome, Napoleon by advancing rapidly to the right to aid Marmont, and the latter proceeding cautiously into the plain of Laon, the principal danger of the operation might be avoided. As to the rest, we must repeat, there was only a choice of perils. The greatest of all would have been to hesitate and not to act.

The 8th having been devoted to refresh and rally the troops, Napoleon resolved on the morning of the 9th to advance into the humid plain of Laon. The daring Ney was to lead the van, and force the defile from Etouvelles to Chivy. To facilitate the execution of his task, Napoleon commanded General Gourgand to lead during the night some light troops across the

wooded hillocks that overlooked our left, and turn the defile by appearing suddenly on the flank of the chaussée between Etouvelles and Chivy. The Roussel division of dragoons had orders, as soon as the defile should be passed, to dash in full gallop on the city of Laon and endeavour to enter *pêle-mêle* with the enemy.

Marshal Ney, to ensure success, set out on the 9th before daybreak, whilst the allied troops were still sunk in profound sleep. The second light infantry, under the conduct of this intrepid marshal, rushed in close column on Etouvelles, surprised and put to the sword Czernicheff's vanguard; and after taking possession of the little village, threw themselves on Chivy, which they also mastered. It even happened that General Gourgand's little column that had been sent to turn the defile, having encountered greater difficulty than the principal column, did not reach Chivy until after Marshal Ney had taken possession of the place. General Gourgand joined Ney at the moment he was entering the plain of Laon. Roussel's division of dragoons then dashed in full gallop on the chaussée, but their progress was arrested by grape poured from a battery of twelve pieces; the leader of a squadron and some men were killed. The cavalry were therefore obliged to pause and wait the arrival of the infantry before they could attack Laon. As to the rest, the defile they had believed so formidable was happily cleared, and the entire army could now deploy in the plain. Ney took up a position in advance of Chivy, opposite the Semilly suburb. Charpentier placed himself on the left with Marshal Victor's two divisions of the young guard; Mortier was stationed on the right with the second division of the old guard, and with the Poret de Morvan division of the young guard. Friant, at the head of the principal division of the old guard, took his place in the centre towards the rear. Lastly came the cavalry and the artillery reserve, making a total of 36,000 combatants. Marmont, at three leagues to the right, separated from Napoleon by the wooded heights, was stationed on the Reims route, waiting the sound of our cannon to venture into the plain.

A thick fog overspread the valley in the middle of which Laon is built; scarcely were the spires of the city discernible rising above this vapour as from a sea. Favoured by the fog, Ney threw himself on the Semilly suburb, situate at the foot of the height on which the town stands; Mortier, on the right with the Poret de Morvan division, advanced on the Ardon suburb, situate in a similar manner. The vivacity of the attack, the dash of a successful commencement, the fog, all contributed to the success of this twofold attempt. Within an hour we made ourselves masters of the two suburbs.

But we soon perceived through the fog, that began to clear off, the singular site that was to become our battlefield, and the enemy might recover their spirits on seeing distinctly the small number of soldiers that had attacked 100,000 men.

Laon is built on a triangular peak, not unlike a tripod, and about 200 metres in height. This eminence commands on every side the verdant valley by which it is surrounded. The old town, enclosed by embattled walls and towers, occupies the entire summit of the hill. At the foot, in the plain, there are to the south the two suburbs of Semilly and Ardon, of which we had just taken possession. To the north there was the suburb of Neuville on the left, of St. Marcel in the centre, and de Vaux on the right, that we could not see, because the city hid them from us. Blucher, after having ceded the plateau of Craonne to our efforts, was determined to dispute the plain of Laon by taking strong hold of the wall-crowned rock that commanded it, and of the suburbs built around. He possessed too much courage, too much patriotism, too much pride, to abandon to 48,000 men a battlefield where he headed 100,000 men; a battlefield whose defence was easy and whose importance was incontestable; and after abandoning which, nothing would remain for him but to retreat without knowing where to pause, for the army of Silesia was separated from the army of Bohemia, so that a junction was impossible. The fate of the war then depended on the possession of Laon, and for both parties it became a matter of necessity either to become masters of the city or perish.

Blucher had an additional motive for making a determined resistance. In consequence of the jealousy that prevailed between the Prussians and Russians—though they were the most united amongst the allies—a false notion prevailed amongst the latter that at Craonne the Prussians had knowingly allowed them to be worsted by the enemy. This prejudice, unreasonable as the prejudices generally are that spring up between allies making war in conjunction, had caused a serious misunderstanding between them, and a battle, where no person would spare himself, was become, besides the military necessity we have already noted, an absolute moral and political necessity. Influenced by these different reasons, Blucher had resolved to defend Laon *à outrance*, and he had for that purpose made excellent arrangements.

The Prussian troops that had not fought on the previous evening were distributed—part on the hill of Laon, part in the plain, opposite the suburbs of Semilly and Ardon, that we had just carried. They were to defend the principal post—that of Laon itself. On the side towards our left and the enemy's right, Woronzoff was placed between Laon and Clacy, opposite

the woody heights through which we had debouched. The corps of Generals Kleist and d'York, combined into one, were stationed at the opposite extremity—that is to say, at our right and the left of the enemy, facing the Reims route, by which Marmont was expected. There remain Sacken and Langeron, that Blucher had placed behind the hill of Laon, hidden from our view as from our fire, and able, as circumstances may require, to advance either on the Soissons chaussée or on that of Reims. Blucher, ignorant of our plan, did not know on which side the principal attack would be made; he had only learned from his scouts that the French troops were advancing along the two routes, and it was on this account he placed a great body of reserve behind Laon to be sent wherever the danger should be greatest.

As soon as the fog cleared off, Blucher ordered the Semilly suburb, lying at the extremity of the Soissons route, to be attacked. Ney had taken possession of the suburb. Blucher also commanded an attack on the suburb of Ardon, situated a little to the right of the Soissons route. Mortier had made himself master of the suburb, that he might be ready to aid Marmont. Woronzoff's infantry attacked Semilly, and that of Bulow did the same at Ardon. As customary in an offensive attack, the Prussians displayed great vigour, entered the two suburbs, and dislodged our soldiers. Already even, Woronzoff's column, that had carried Semilly, was advancing en masse along the Soissons chaussée, and this movement would cut off the means of retreat from Mortier's troops, who, driven out of Ardon, were scattered in confusion on the right. At this sight Marshal Ney, putting himself at the head of some squadrons of the guard, dashes on the Prussian infantry, stops their onward course, gives his own infantry time to rally, and leads them on Semilly, of which he victoriously regains possession. Whilst Ney was performing this exploit in our front, General Belliard, on our right, replacing Grouchy in the command of the cavalry, put himself at the head of the dragoons of Spain (Roussel division), charges in his turn Bulow's infantry, defeats them, and opens to Mortier the road to Ardon.

After having several times taken, lost, and retaken these suburbs of Semilly and Ardon, situate at the foot of the rock of Laon, the two armies remained grouped around these two points, and bitterly exasperated against each other. The enemy regained possession of half a suburb, were driven out, and immediately returned again. Napoleon, burning with impatience, despatched aide-de-camp after aide-de-camp to Marshal Marmont to hasten his approach; for he flattered himself, with reason, that the sudden appearance of this marshal would produce a moral panic amongst the allies, of which he would profit to force them from the foot of this hill, to which they

were so strongly attached. But three leagues of marsh and wooded hills to traverse, and a cloud of Cossacks, left little hope of communicating with Marmont.

Meanwhile Napoleon, believing that, were there any means of dislodging Blucher from this fatal rock of Laon, it would be by outflanking him, ordered the brave Charpentier, with his two divisions of the young guard, who had covered themselves with glory the preceding evening, to file along the wooded heights that surround the plain, and carry the village of Clacy on our left, whence they could advance and turn Laon by the Neuville suburb and the route de la Fère.

This order was bravely executed. The sharpshooters advanced through the woods to divide the attention of the enemy; whilst General Charpentier, skirting the foot of the heights, traversed successively Vaucelles, Mons-en-Laonnois, and at length reached the village of Clacy, that was occupied by one of Woronzoff's divisions. Friant, with a division of the old guard, followed to support him if necessary. Charpentier fell on Clacy with such vigour that he entered, spite of a most determined resistance on the part of the Prussians. Our young soldiers, infuriated by the spirit of carnage, bayoneted some hundreds of the enemy. We made some hundred prisoners. This success on our left was of sufficient importance to influence the fate of the battle, for it gave us some chance of turning Blucher. It was neutralised, however, on our right by the loss of the Ardon suburb. Bulow threw himself, for the last time, furiously on that point. The Poret de Morvan division had their general killed, and were obliged to fall back. But in the centre Ney had remained master of the Semilly suburb, that commanded the chaussée of Soissons. On the right, if we had lost Ardon, we had taken possession of the village of Semilly; on the left, we held Clacy, whence it was possible to turn Laon. There was evidently a positive advantage gained by the main column, commanded by Napoleon in person; and spite our numerical inferiority, we might still hope to conquer the plain of Laon, so deeply bedewed with blood; but we could only hope to conquer on condition that on our extreme right, that is to say, on the Reims route, success should crown our efforts.

Effectively, on the Reims route, Marmont had at length debouched from Festieux into the plain of Laon. His cannon was heard at two in the afternoon, and filled Napoleon with hope, Blucher with anxiety.

He had advanced along the Reims route, on the village of Athies, in sight of the enemy's cavalry, with the young division of Padua at the head of his column. He had repulsed the attacks of the cavalry, and had drawn near to the village of Athies. The troops of d'York and Kleist had possession of the place.

Marmont, who heard the cannon of the emperor, and who felt the necessity of doing something on this day to aid his designs, thought he ought to carry Athies. Wishing to render the attack as easy as possible to his young troops, he placed forty pieces of artillery in his front, and cannonaded the village unceasingly. He afterwards commanded the Duke of Padua's infantry to make an assault, and the place was carried. The day drawing to a close, he paused and established himself on the spot that conquest had made his.

Up to that point all went on well, and that day, though we had only accomplished half our work, promised good results on the next, if we could only compensate for our numerical inferiority. This was a serious difficulty, for we were fighting under a disadvantage of two to one, and with young troops against the veteran bands of Europe. However, such extraordinary feats had been performed during this campaign, and especially on the two previous days, that if on the morrow the French troops dashed vigorously from the point they had already reached, Marmont thus drawing towards him the principal mass of the enemy, Napoleon could bring his troops from Clacy, on the rear of Laon, and the victory would be almost certain. But that affairs should assume this aspect, a fortunate combination of circumstances would be needed. In the first place, the French should combine at a great distance, and then advance through woods, through marshy plains, and crowds of Cossacks, and afterwards pass the night, especially Marmont, in very unsafe positions.

Marmont, unprotected at the village of Athies, in the midst of the plain, awaited Napoleon's instructions, which he had sent Colonel Fabvier, at the head of five hundred men, to learn. Was it well of Marmont to remain stationary, or ought he not rather, after having during the day caught a sight of the immense masses of the enemy's cavalry, to have taken up a position for the night in the rear, towards Festieux for example, a kind of little hillock by which he had debouched into the plain, and where he would have been in perfect safety. But the mistaken fear of abandoning the spot he had conquered in the afternoon restrained him, and deterred him from making the retrograde movement that prudence would have suggested. What was still less excusable, as he did remain amidst hordes of enemies, was the not multiplying precautions against a night attack. With a characteristic thoughtlessness that detracted from his good qualities, Marmont deputed to his lieutenants the duty of providing for the common safety. The latter allowed their young tired soldiers to scatter themselves in the neighbouring farms; they did not even think of protecting the battery of forty pieces that had cannonaded Athies with so

much success. It was young marine-gunners, little accustomed to land service, that tended these cannon, and they had not taken the precaution to place their guns on the avant train, so that they might be able to remove them at the first appearance of danger. Everybody, commander and officers, trusted to the darkness of night, of which they ought, on the contrary, to have entertained the deepest distrust.

There were, alas! only too many reasons for distrusting this fatal night, for Blucher, as soon as he heard Marmont's cannon, believed that the attack by the Reims route was the true attack, and that the other, which had occupied the day on the Soissons route, was only a feint. He consequently decided to bring down the mass of his army on the Reims route. He immediately put into motion Sacken and Langeron, who had remained en reserve behind Laon. They had orders to make a circuitous march round the city, and join Kleist and d'York; Blucher, besides, sent part of his cavalry, which on that side could not fail to be useful. The day was far advanced when this movement was terminated; still the Prussian general was not willing to bind himself to preparatory arrangements, and conceived the design of profiting by the darkness to effect a night surprise by leading on his cavalry en masse.

Towards midnight, in fact, when Marmont's soldiers least expected it, a mass of horsemen dashed upon them, uttering terrific cries. Old soldiers accustomed to the vicissitudes of war would have been less surprised, and sooner rallied; but a sudden panic spread through the ranks of this young infantry, that took flight in every direction. The artillerymen, who had not thought of arranging their pieces so that they might be easily removed, fled without thinking of them. The enemy, amid the darkness, become mixed with us, and make part of the tumult; whilst their horsed artillery pursue us, firing grape, at the risk of killing Prussians as well as French. All hurry on in indescribable disorder, not knowing what to do, and Marmont is carried away at the same pace as the rest. Fortunately the 6th corps, which formed the nucleus of Marmont's troops, recover a little of their sang-froid, and stop at the heights of Festieux, where it would have been so easy to find a secure position during the night. The enemy, not daring to advance further, suspend the pursuit, and our soldiers, delivered from their presence, rally at length from their disorder.

This accident, one of the most vexatious that could befall a general, particularly on account of the consequences it involved, cost us materially only some pieces of cannon, 200 or 300 men put hors de combat, and about 1000 prisoners, the greater number of whom returned next day; but our enterprise, already so difficult and complicated, was defeated. On learning during

the night this deplorable skirmish, Napoleon gave way to the most violent anger against Marshal Marmont; but giving way to anger would not repair the mischief, and he immediately began to think what was best to be done. To give up the attack and retire would be to commence a retreat that must lead to the ruin of France and his own. To attack, when the movement confided to Marmont was no longer possible, and when he would be confronted by masses of the enemy assembled between Laon and the Soissons chaussée—to attack under such circumstances would have been rash. Either course seemed to lead to destruction. Listening only to the promptings of his own energetic soul, Napoleon determined to make a desperate attempt on Laon, and see whether chance, so fruitful of events in war, might not do for him what the most skilfully laid plans had not been able to effect.

Napoleon was about to throw himself on Laon when Blucher anticipated him. The latter had first thought of sending half his army against Marmont, believing his to be our principal column. But in his staff numerous voices were raised against this project, and it was proved to him that, above all things, he ought to oppose Napoleon in front of the city of Laon. Blucher, who was ill that day, and more inclined than usual to yield to the advice of his lieutenants, had therefore suspended the prescribed movement, and determined to direct his efforts straight before him, that is to say, on Clacy, whence Napoleon threatened to turn his position.

At the very moment that Napoleon was putting his troops in motion to renew the attack, three divisions of Woronzoff's infantry, advancing on our left, deployed around the village of Clacy, intending to carry the place. General Charpentier, who had replaced Victor, was at Clacy with his own division of the young guard and that of General Boyer, both very much reduced in number by the late engagements. Ney had on his side advanced to the left to support General Charpentier; he placed his artillery a little in the rear and diagonally, so that he could take the Russian masses *en écharpe* that were about to fall on Clacy. At nine in the morning an obstinate engagement commenced around this unfortunate village, whose site, happily for us, was slightly elevated. General Charpentier, who during the past days had displayed as much energy as skill, allowed the Russian infantry to advance within musket shot, and then received them with a terrible fusilade. The officers and sub-officers exposed themselves incessantly, seeking to compensate for the want of training in their young soldiers, who, in every respect, exhibited an unexampled devotedness. The first Russian division was received with so destructive a fire that they were driven back to the foot of the position, and immediately re-

placed by another that received like treatment. The assailing troops were exposed, not alone to the fire from Clacy, but to that of Marshal Ney's artillery, which, happily posted as we have just related, committed fearful ravages in the enemy's ranks. In truth, some of the projectiles from this artillery knocked off some of our soldiers at Clacy, but in the enthusiasm that prevailed we only thought of checking the enemy and destroying them, no matter at what price.

The same attack, renewed five times by the Russians, failed five times through the heroism of General Charpentier and his soldiers. The Russians, repulsed, fell back on Laon. Napoleon, again conceiving some slight hopes, and flattering himself with having perhaps tired out the tenacity of Blucher, ordered Ney's two divisions (Meunier and Curial) to advance straight on Laon, through the Semilly suburb, which we had not evacuated. Our young soldiers, led by Ney to the hillock, overturned everything before them, ascended one side of the triangular peak of Laon, and taking advantage of the conformation of the land, which here was hollowed and receding, they succeeded in attaining the walls of the city. But Bulow's infantry stopped them at the foot of the ramparts, then pouring forth showers of grape, forced them to redescend this fatal height, before which our good fortune deserted us. Napoleon, however, who did not yet abandon the hope of driving Blucher from his position, sent Druot at the head of a detachment to a great distance on our left, to try whether it would not be possible to advance along the route of La Fère and annoy the enemy sufficiently to make him let go his hold.

Druot, whose sincerity was never called in question, having, after a daring reconnaissance, pronounced this last attempt impracticable, Napoleon was obliged to admit the belief that Blucher's position was impregnable. The positions of each had been so during the last twenty-four hours: Blucher had been as powerless against Clacy and Semilly as Napoleon against Laon. But Napoleon's position would not continue impregnable twenty-four hours longer, should Blucher execute his project of marching en masse by the route from Laon to Reims, to drive Marmont back on Berry-au-Bac, and cross the Aisne on our right. It was therefore impossible for Napoleon to remain where he was; he was obliged to retrace his steps and fall back on Soissons. However painful this determination might be, still, as it was indispensable, Napoleon made up his mind without hesitation, and the next morning, the 11th of March, he repassed the defile of Chivy and Etouvelles to fall back on Soissons, whilst Marmont, posted on the bridge of Berry-au-Bac, defended the Aisne above him. The enemy took especial care not to pursue this angry lion, the thought of whose return

made even a victorious enemy tremble. Napoleon could therefore return to Soissons without disquietude.

These three terrible days—the 7th at Craonne, the 9th and 10th at Laon—had cost Napoleon about 12,000 men; and if they cost the enemy 15,000, that was a poor consolation, because our adversaries had still 90,000 soldiers, whilst we had little more than 40,000, including even the small division of the Duke of Padua, who had come to reinforce Marshal Marmont. But the worst of all was, not the numerical but the moral loss, and the military consequences of the last operations.

To neglect Schwarzenberg a moment, in order again to discomfit Blucher, and afterwards return to Schwarzenberg, either by falling directly on the latter, or by first calling out the garrisons; such was the last project Napoleon devised, and which ought, if fortune did not prove a traitor, to enable him to drive his enemies from France. But not having beaten Blucher, though he had chastised him severely, he was about to be pursued by this indefatigable adversary in going to attack Schwarzenberg, and he thus ran the risk of seeing them both combine to overwhelm him. The danger was palpable, and difficult to avoid.

Napoleon returned deeply dejected to Soissons, but less dejected than his soldiers, who comprehended perfectly well the position of affairs, and began to fear that their efforts would be powerless to save France. But the inflexible spirit of Napoleon, enlightened by his great experience, which had shown him that the chances of war are inexhaustible, and that affairs are never desperate provided a general perseveres —the inflexible spirit of Napoleon was not cast down. He still reckoned on the erroneous movements of the enemy, and flattered himself that a fault of the presumptuous Blucher, perhaps of the prudent Schwarzenberg himself, would restore him the good fortune he had lost. As to the rest, he was still placed between his two adversaries, and consequently in a position to prevent their junction; he had still some resources at Paris; and if he abandoned the capital to itself, to advance towards the fortresses, he would necessarily command still greater reinforcements, with which he might perhaps change the face of things. He preserved a firmness of mind, of which few warriors have given an example, perhaps not one, for no man ever fell from so high an eminence into so fearful an abyss. He had, in fact, excited the anger of the entire world against himself personally, and had completely lost the affections of France. He still possessed, it is true, an admirable corps of officers, formed in his school, and filled with a pious despair, which they communicated to the heroic youth of France who joined them as they marched—all ad-

vancing to the slaughter together. Besides, he still retained his inexhaustible genius, and a well-founded pride in the great deeds he had accomplished; and he was not disturbed, for, without doubt, even in his fall, he saw visioned before him that indestructible glory which to the latest posterity shall halo his name. Having returned to Soissons, which the enemy had not dared to keep, he watched, with his eye fixed on his enemies, which of them should commit the fault of which he hoped to profit. He had been in the town twenty-four hours busied in distributing bread and shoes to his young soldiers, to whom he also allowed some repose, and whom he also tried to drill a little better, when one of his numerous pursuing enemies chanced to come within his reach. This was General Priest, who brought a new detachment, called off from the blockade of the fortress, and replaced by German militia. He had advanced from the Ardennes on Reims, and had repulsed from this city Corbineau's detachment. This detachment consisted of 15,000 soldiers, Russians and Prussians, commanded by an excellent officer, unfortunately French, whom hatred of the régime of 1793 had driven to Russia, and who had not returned when this régime had ceased to bedew France with blood. These 15,000 men were not a prey of sufficient importance to indemnify Napoleon for his late losses; but falling on them, he would at least prove that it was still dangerous to be in his neighbourhood, and might render his enemies more circumspect. Whilst waiting a better chance this was not to be despised.

Whilst Blucher was stopped on the banks of the Aisne by Marshal Marmont's presence at Berry-au-Bac, Napoleon prepared to go from Soissons to Reims to overthrow St. Priest's corps. On the evening of the 12th he ordered Marmont to leave at Berry-au-Bac whatever forces were indispensably necessary, and to advance to Reims with the rest, whilst he repaired there by the route of Fismes. They were the following morning—the 13th—to effect a junction within a league of Reims. The greatest secrecy was commanded and observed.

On the night of the 12th March, Napoleon, after having ordered thirty pieces of cannon to be formed into a battery at Soissons, behind *sacs à terre et des tonneaux*, after having destroyed every obstacle that impeded the defence, after having left as a garrison some fragments of battalions and a good commander, he set out for Reims, enjoying the demi-satisfaction that the success he was about to achieve inspired. At the break of day he met Marmont's corps and the marshal himself, whom he reproached, but yet not so severely as he might have done. He then urged forward to Reims the 30,000 men he had assembled for this *coup de main*.

On the way Napoleon fell in, on the right, at the village of Rosney, with two Prussian battalions that were making soup. He disturbed their repast by making them all prisoners, spite of a certain amount of resistance on their part. He soon after found himself opposite Reims. Napoleon, who wished to cut off the entire of St. Priest's corps, conceived the idea of sending his cavalry across the Vesle, and making them advance beyond Reims to cut off the retreat of the imprudent enemy that had fallen into his snares. But the allies had destroyed the bridge it had cost him so much time to rebuild, and he was forced to content himself with driving back on Reims St. Priest's troops, who had issued from the city to defend the heights. The French attacked the enemy with the greatest vigour, and after a very short combat, drove them from the heights upon the town. Then the emperor ordered the regiments of the guard of honour to rush upon them. General Philippe de Ségur, who commanded one of these regiments, turned the extreme left of the enemy, overthrew their cavalry, and captured eleven pieces of cannon. The Russian infantry, taken in the rear by this movement, rushed towards Reims. They wished to defend the city gates, but the French demolished them with cannon-shot, and then entered the town *pêle-mêle* with the Russians; they made 4000 prisoners. This rapid *coup de main*, which scarcely cost us a few hundred men, deprived St. Priest's corps of 6000—the remainder retreated. M. de St. Priest lost his life on this occasion.

This success, without restoring to Napoleon the ascendency he possessed after Montmirail, had, however, the good effect of encouraging his soldiers and restraining the enemy, who now felt the necessity of weighing their least movement in presence of such an enemy. Napoleon paused at Reims to profit of any favourable circumstances that might arise.

The situation of affairs, both political and military, had undergone a serious change during the ten or twelve days the emperor had been engaged combating Blucher. On quitting Troyes, he had ordered Marshal Oudinot, General Gerard, and Marshal Macdonald to continue to pursue Prince Schwarzenberg, and drive him beyond the Aube, though he still pretended to negotiate an armistice at Lusigny. He had at the same time ordered his lieutenants, who had under their command more than 30,000 men, to make the soldiers at the outposts cry "*Vive l'Empereur!*" in order to persuade the enemy that he had not left. But this illusion had endured only four and twenty hours. The manner in which the Austrian general had been pursued after the emperor's departure was sufficient to prove his absence, and Prince Schwarzenberg, who had promised to resume offensive operations as soon as Napoleon's attention should be

directed from him, had fulfilled his promise on the morning of the 27th February. Wishing to bring back to the Aube the French troops that had crossed the river in pursuit of him, he sent Marshal de Wrède towards Bar-sur-Aube, and Prince Wittgenstein in the direction of the bridge of Dolancourt. He kept under his own command Giulay and the Austrian reserves.

Marshal Oudinot and General Gerard had taken up a position on the Aube, and Marshal Macdonald on the Seine. The two former, whose peril was greatest, having on the morning of the 27th perceived that the enemy had resumed offensive operations, had changed their position—General Gerard to Bar-sur-Aube, and Marshal Oudinot to Dolancourt, to dispute at these two points the passage of the Aube. Marshal Oudinot thinking the situation of Dolancourt bad, for it was overlooked on every side by high grounds, and thinking, moreover, that a retrograde movement would reveal too clearly the absence of Napoleon, had determined to take up a position in advance of the Aube, and defend *à outrance* the heights of Arsonval and of Arrentières. Leaving the Pacthod division of the national guards to cover the bridge of Dolancourt, he sent to the heights beyond, the two brigades of the Leval division and the remaining brigade of the Boyer division. These three divisions, brought from Spain, supported by the dragoons, also from Spain, and comprising seven thousand foot soldiers and two thousand horse, with at the utmost thirty pieces of artillery, could with great difficulty hold their ground, in sight of the enemy's hundred pieces of artillery. The Montfort and Chassé brigades, first exposed to a shower of grape, and afterwards attacked by the Austrian cuirassiers, had not yet yielded an inch, but repulsed every assault, whilst the Count de Valmy, fording the Aube, came to their assistance. These two infantry brigades, completely surrounded by the enemy, without exhibiting the slightest emotion, assisted alternately by the Pinoteau brigade and by the dragoons of Spain—who charged at full gallop the formidable Austrian artillery, and killed the gunners beside the cannon—kept possession of the battlefield during the entire day. At length, towards night, seeing the remainder of the grand army of Bohemia ready to fall upon them, they quitted the heights, regained the banks of the river, and effected their retreat in good order. This admirable combat, sustained on one side by from eight to nine thousand men, first against thirty, and afterwards against forty thousand, had cost the enemy three thousand, and us two thousand men. Had Napoleon only had such soldiers, the result of this great struggle would certainly have been different.

Whilst Oudinot, with the troops from Spain, so well defended the heights before Dolancourt, General Gerard on his side had

checked the Bavarians before Bar-sur-Aube, and had killed several without losing many of his own troops, thanks to the barricades by which he was covered. Macdonald, hearing the cannonade, had hastened from the Seine to the Aube to co-operate in the defence of the attacked posts.

Although this sharp combat, in which Prince Wittgenstein had been seriously, and Prince Schwarzenberg slightly wounded, was of a nature to render the army of Bohemia still more prudent than usual, still it was easy to discern by the number of troops engaged that this *corps d'armée* only served as a screen, and that Napoleon was elsewhere. Had Prince Schwarzenberg entertained a doubt on this subject, it must have vanished at seeing before him at the utmost eight or nine thousand men. Thenceforth his project of retreating on Chaumont was abandoned, and whether that he was goaded by the reproaches of the allies; whether that he was jealous of keeping his word, pledged to the army of Silesia, he resolved to advance, and at least recover his position at Troyes, whilst Blucher continued to run the chances of an isolated march. Consequently, on the 28th he put his troops in motion, and the three French generals, judging with reason that the Aube was not tenable, and that Troyes even might be turned on every side, had fallen back on the Seine, between Nogent and Montereau, the rearguard engaged all the way in sharp skirmishes. Prince Schwarzenberg had followed them, had again taken possession of Troyes, and occupied the banks of the Seine from Nogent to Montereau. He had made a firm resolution that Blucher, advancing on Paris, should not advance alone.

The situation of affairs, considered in a military point of view, had assumed a very gloomy colouring during the ten or twelve days employed by Napoleon in contending with Blucher. Politically considered, things had become wonderfully worse.

The conferences at Lusigny had been definitely abandoned, because Prince Schwarzenberg had no further need of them to free himself from Napoleon's pursuit, and because Napoleon persisted in bringing forward the frontier question under the veil of an armistice. On entering Troyes the prince had dismissed the commissioners, who had endeavoured for a moment to arrest the effusion of blood by an armistice. As to the rest, he did so with regret, and solely constrained by the spirit that prevailed amongst the allies.

At Chatillon, in like manner, things were on the eve of a rupture. We have already said that when, on the 1st of March, at Chaumont, Lord Castlereagh had induced the allies to sign a treaty, he had also persuaded them to fix a term, after which they would no longer wait M. de Caulaincourt's counter-project. The term fixed was the 10th March, and M. de Caulaincourt

was informed that after that date the congress would be dissolved, and all further negotiation deferred till either Napoleon or the allies should have succumbed. Prince Esterhazy had been sent secretly by M. de Metternich to M. de Caulaincourt to repeat his former advice, of treating, treating at any price, for should the present opportunity pass unprofited of, the allies would never renew negotiations with Napoleon, and besides, they contemplated depriving him, not alone of the Rhine, but of his throne. M. de Caulaincourt had sent this intelligence to headquarters, imploring the emperor to allow him to cede some points of the Frankfort bases; for if he persisted in his determination, the negotiations would be instantly broken off, and not only his imperial rank, but his very existence would be at stake.

The information transmitted by M. de Caulaincourt, and which he had gained from the secret but sincere counsels of Prince Esterhazy, was strictly true. To the impatience to enter Paris that Alexander experienced, to the furious hatred that influenced the Prussians, were now added the urgent solicitations of the royalist party. M. de Vitrolles, despatched, as we have seen, with a commission accredited by M. de Dalberg, but not by M. de Talleyrand, had succeeded, after many detours, in reaching the headquarters of the allies, and had obtained admission by using the tokens of recognition he brought from M. de Stadion. Though he was wholly unknown to the allied ministers, they after some time accorded him their confidence as they listened to his sincere and impassioned language, as they listened, above all, to the names of the high personages under whose authority he acted. This was the first important communication the allied sovereigns had received, and it had the effect, not alone of affording them satisfaction, but of redoubling their courage, by holding out the hope of finding within Paris itself a party that would open the gates for them, and having secured their entrance, would aid them to constitute a government with whom they could negotiate. This hope, so strong when they had first crossed the Rhine, and which had since become so weak on witnessing so few manifestations in favour of the Bourbons, now revived, and strengthened considerably their determination to advance. The allies questioned M. de Vitrolles in detail about the state of Paris, they complained of knowing nothing on the subject, and repeated the old story, that, not having made war either for or against any dynasty, they would not think of dethroning Napoleon excepting France manifested a decided wish to that effect, in which case they would be happy to aid in delivering her from the yoke that weighed so heavily on her and on Europe. Upon this, M. de Vitrolles, adducing the names of MM. de

Talleyrand and de Dalberg, who had great weight in the allied camp, much more than men of higher rank amongst the royalists—on this, we say, M. de Vitrolles replied, that France, trembling under the imperial tyranny, dared not manifest her real sentiments; that, besides, knowing that the European courts were negotiating with Napoleon at Chatillon, she was still less disposed to raise the standard of revolt against him, a standard which the sovereigns in arms had not themselves dared to raise; but if they broke off definitely with Napoleon, the allied monarchs would see burst out on every side a unanimous demonstration in favour of the house of Bourbon. It was unfortunately true that the aversion of France to despotism and to war had weakened her horror of foreigners, and though she had completely forgotten the Bourbons, she would willingly accept any government whatsoever that would release her from sufferings that had become insupportable. This truth, undoubtedly much exaggerated by the envoy of MM. de Talleyrand and de Dalberg, had naturally made a profound impression on the ministers and sovereigns assembled at Troyes, and they informed M. de Vitrolles that they were obliged to continue the conferences at Chatillon to a certain date; that if Napoleon accepted the frontiers of 1793, they would treat with him; that, in the opposite case, they would break off, and then listen to whatever could be said in favour of another government, provided that this government was agreeable to the French people, and seemed likely to be permanent. But the partisans of war *à outrance*, though they had no reason to be excited, had, on learning the late intelligence, felt a still greater desire to break off the negotiations at Chatillon, and to march on Paris. This was the motive of the repeated and secret advice that Austria sent to M. de Caulaincourt. A few moments more, and the entire aspect of things would be changed.*

At Paris, too, things assumed a most threatening aspect. Napoleon had, as we have seen, sent the treaty proposed by the plenipotentiaries at Chatillon to the regent, Marie Louise, flattering himself that these dishonouring propositions would call up the indignation of all in whose veins French blood flowed. The different papers relative to the negotiation had been laid before a council held in presence of Marie Louise and Joseph, on the 4th March. Napoleon, who had so much altered the truth with regard to the Prague negotiations, and even to those

* The principal personage employed in these negotiations, M. de Vitrolles, has, in his spirited and yet unedited memoirs, given an account of his mission to the allied camp. I am indebted for a sight of these memoirs to the kindness of the gentleman in whose possession they are. I am therefore sure of the correctness of the recital I have just made, the more so as I have compared M. de Vitrolles' testimony with that of some of the principal personages of the time, and my narration is the result of these compared testimonies.

of Frankfort, had resolved this time to tell the entire truth, because he hoped it would excite an outburst of anger. Alas! the truth now only confounded those who heard it, enervated as they were by a long-continued despotism. There were amongst the members of this council good citizens and honest men, but they were as much afraid of offending Napoleon by advising an immediate peace as they were of displeasing the public by recommending a prolongation of the war. They were, in fact, alarmed at being called on to deliberate on so grave a question. There were also present on this occasion, besides the empress and Joseph, the grand dignitaries, the ministers, and some presidents of the *Conseil d'État*. After the different papers had been read, all observed a long silence, the combined result of surprise and terror. Then Joseph, who presided, having compelled each, by a personal appeal, to break silence, the twenty members stammered out their opinions in an embarrassed manner, and with a brevity that indicated not energy but weakness. The proposed treaty, they all admitted, was most humiliating; indeed, some who did not hesitate to call things by their right names, declared it to be an actual capitulation. "It was to be hoped," they said, "that the genius of the emperor, which had already accomplished so many prodigies, would effect one more—that of driving back the enemy, and forcing the concession of more favourable conditions. However, they did not know the precise state of affairs; the emperor alone knew that; he alone could judge and give an enlightened advice on the subject—which was very true, thanks to the form of government; but if, however, the position of things was as desperate as was said, and as it seemed, judging by appearances, would it not be better to treat on the bases of the ancient frontiers, than to allow foreigners to enter Paris? It was impossible to hide the fact, that if foreigners entered the capital, they would not respect the glorious dynasty under which France then existed; foreigners would attempt a total change in the home government, and that was a calamity that ought to be averted at any cost. Undoubtedly, to lose Belgium would be a serious loss; but it was better to lose Belgium than France, and above all, the throne. Besides, after all, France such as she had been under Louis XIV., having her emperor at her head, would be still great, for her greatness did not depend on having one or two provinces more or less. Napoleon had given sufficient proofs of possessing a warlike genius; it was to be desired that he should now find time to exhibit a genius for peace, and procure his country as great an amount of happiness as he had already done of glory. Then France would soon recover the effects of her late drains, and would find an opportunity of regaining what the violence of foreigners might at present deprive

her of. But, in any case," said these servile men, who ardently wished for peace, without daring to avow their wishes—"in any case, if his imperial majesty, who alone knew the real state of things, and was alone in a position to judge accurately—if his imperial majesty was inclined to accept the proposal of the ancient frontiers, the council was of opinion that his majesty might do so without detriment to his honour, for his true honour was the interest of France, and the interest of France was immediate peace."

Certainly the interest of France was peace, but it was her interest a year, two years, six years earlier, and that would have been the time to say so. To continue the war now involved danger only to the reigning dynasty; France under the Bourbons would be neither smaller nor less influential than the plenipotentiaries at Chatillon wished to render her; it is even certain that the dread of Napoleon influenced the allies very much in their desire to weaken France; were she under the Bourbons, they would be much less solicitous to reduce her natural and secular power. Things having arrived at the point at which they were, there was no danger in risking a few battles more, which might lead to a settlement whose conditions would be a compromise between the ancient and modern frontiers, by which we might secure Mayence by sacrificing Antwerp. One man alone, whose name deserves mention—M. de Cessac—recorded his vote against accepting the Chatillon propositions. With this single exception, all the members of the council of regency exhibited an unprecedented subservience. The most daring expressed in a more decided tone the same cowardly feeling: "Peace or war as the emperor pleases." Such was their sole opinion; but it signified that, if by chance the emperor should prefer war, it was what they, too, desired.*

Napoleon had always manifested extreme contempt for those large assemblies where questions of war or politics are debated, because in reality those whom he met in such places were men fashioned by despotism—the greater number having no opinion of their own, very few amongst them capable of forming one, and these endeavouring to discover the wishes of the ruler as a guide to theirs; others were contradictions either through bad temper or discontent. This council, had Napoleon been present, would have justified his opinion, and revealed the effects of the régime under which he had pressed down France, and under which he was about to sink himself. As to the rest, he would be very much disappointed, for he had wished to excite a burst of patriotic indignation, and he received, on the contrary, a

* The report of this council is still extant, with the recorded opinion of each member; and should it ever be published, it will be seen that I have not exaggerated in any particular.

humble and trembling supplication for peace, a supplication written under the influence of two sources of fear—fear of him, and fear of the enemy.

But the humility that these advisers testified in presence of his wife, his brother, and his faithful chancellor Cambacérès, was flung aside when they no longer found themselves confronted by these formidable witnesses—they then gave vent to very different language. Their submission to Napoleon's wishes was suddenly transformed into fury against his obstinacy. "*This man is mad,*" was the expression echoed on every side. "He will get us all killed," said men that had never appeared on a battlefield. Amongst the men particularly attached to Joseph—and these, generally speaking, were the civil or military employés who had sought at Madrid the advancement they could not find at Paris—it was insinuated that it would be better to place in Joseph's hands the power of saving France. These friends of Joseph, very ill treated by Napoleon, who accused them of causing our misfortunes in Spain, now repaid his ill treatment with disparaging remarks, and said it would be better to proclaim a regency, of which Joseph should be president, for with him Europe would be more willing to treat than with Napoleon. They asserted this to be an adroit manner of soothing the pride of the allied sovereigns as well as of Napoleon himself, and of delivering France from the rule of a man whose genius was only suited to war, and confiding her destinies to one whose genius was essentially that of peace. This was a plainly spoken wish that Napoleon should abdicate, and Joseph take his place. But it was only the most rash, that is to say, the most discontented, who dared to hold this language. Those who confined themselves to wishing that a speedy termination should be put to the war, and had no idea of subverting the throne, contented themselves with saying that, in reply to the debate provoked by Napoleon, it would be right to send him an address containing a formal demand for peace.

These sentiments obtained so much, that Joseph, adopting the opinions of those who wished to facilitate peace on Napoleon's part by making pacific demonstrations, thought proper to consult M. Meneval, whose fidelity was unalterable, and commissioned him to write to headquarters to know whether a peace movement would be agreeable to the emperor, and in what form he would wish it to be made. M. Meneval declared that he would inform the emperor correctly of everything that occurred, and would afterwards listen to what it was lawful for him to hear. He therefore wrote immediately to Napoleon, with the delicate reserve which he was capable of, combined with the most perfect frankness.

Napoleon, on arriving at Reims, found M. Meneval's letter,

and several others, that gave him a clear idea of the state of affairs. Thanks to his wondrous sagacity, which distrust heightened but did not confuse, he guessed everything; perhaps that in the first moment of excitement he exaggerated a little what he divined. He was especially displeased because the Duke de Rovigo, not wishing to compromise any one, and not attaching much importance to the opinions of those who surrounded Joseph, had sent him no report of what had occurred. With the promptitude and utter want of discretion that too often characterised his manner of acting, he wrote the following letter to the Duke de Rovigo. In this document we find only evidences of a dreary despotism, nor would it deserve to be quoted did it not, at the same time, exhibit an inflexibility of character very extraordinary under the circumstances.

"To the Minister of Police.

"REIMS, 14*th March* 1814.

"You do not inform me of anything that is going on at Paris. People there talk of an address, of a regency, and lay a thousand plots as stupid as absurd, and which could only be conceived by a fool like Miot. These people do not know that I, like Alexander, cut the Gordian knot. Let them know that I am still the same man that I was at Wagram and at Austerlitz; that I do not wish for State intrigues; that there is no authority but mine, and should events become pressing, it is the empress-regent who alone possesses my confidence. The king (Joseph) is weak-minded, and allows himself to be seduced into intrigues that may prove fatal to the State, and above all, to him and his advisers, if he do not quickly return to the right path. I am displeased at learning all this from another source than from you. Be assured that had an address been drawn up, opposed to the governing authority, I would have had the king, my ministers, and all who signed it arrested. These men spoil the national guard, they spoil the Parisians, because they are themselves weak-minded, and do not understand the temper of the country. I want no tribunes of the people. Let the people not forget that I am the great tribune; they will then do what is conducive to their real interests, which are the constant object of my thoughts."

After this vexatious experience of the men that surrounded him, Napoleon took upon himself to reply to the plenipotentiaries at Chatillon. He had already commanded M. de Caulaincourt to use every means to prolong the negotiations and prevent a rupture, without, however, conceding the proposed bases. The question still was of the counter-project, required within a fixed time, and which Napoleon, without actually refusing, felt extreme repugnance to present. He renewed his instructions this time, in terms as prudent as honourable.

"Ask," he wrote to M. de Caulaincourt, "whether the proposed preliminaries, to which you are requested to present a counter-project, are the *dernier mot* of the allies. If it is so, you break off immediately, whatever may be the consequence, and we shall tell France to what the allies have tried to subject us. If, on the contrary, as is very probable, you are told it is not their *dernier mot*, you will reply that we, on our side, referring incessantly to the Frankfort bases, have not uttered our *dernier mot;* but they cannot require that we should offer, in a counter-project, the sacrifices they wish to force from us; for," he added, "*if they wish to flog us, they will not, at least, oblige us to lay on the whip ourselves.*"

Napoleon wished that M. de Caulaincourt, by entering into a discussion of details, should learn precisely what it would be necessary to sacrifice, and what it would be still possible to retain; for the disadvantage of offering a counter-project was, that in our ignorance of the definite intentions of the allies on each point, we might yield what it was possible for us to keep. He authorised M. de Caulaincourt to abandon in the first instance Dutch Brabant, that is to say, the part of Holland of which in 1810 he had deprived his brother Louis. This was a very slight concession, for the frontier, extending from the Wahal to the Meuse, was what was called the natural frontier, or the *Frankfort bases*, and secured to us the Schelde and Antwerp. Napoleon also authorised his plenipotentiary to renounce the different spots of territory we possessed on the right bank of the Rhine as annexations of the left bank, such as Wesel, Cassel, and Kehl. We thus, though keeping possession of the left, abandoned the bridges that secured us a facility of landing on the right bank. Napoleon also consented to demolish the fortifications of Mayence and reduce the place to a mere commercial town. He was willing to resign all that France possessed beyond the Alps, and all the States governed by his brothers, either in Germany or in Italy, without requiring any compensation, except for Prince Eugène. The sacrifice of Spain had been long since made; Napoleon again formally renounced that kingdom; and as to our colonies, he authorised M. de Caulaincourt to declare that France would yield some of her factories in India (those that we still possess) without the isles of France and Réunion; she would give up Guadeloupe, but not the Saintes; she would resign Martinique, but not her other possessions in the Antilles. These were all of so little value that Napoleon was willing to abandon them, if he could retain some continental possessions. He ought to have said, "France prefers free trade with the colonies of every other nation that have been independent, or are about to become so, to possessions in the new world, that are at the same time valueless and difficult to defend." Should M. de Caulaincourt

not succeed in getting each point discussed, he was to draw up a counter-project on these bases, and await the reply, whatever it might be.

These instructions, which had already been despatched from Craonne, and renewed at Reims, with a little additional latitude, but without exceeding what we have just reported, were only a reproduction of the Frankfort bases, and could not prolong the negotiations beyond a few days. M. de Caulaincourt was deeply afflicted on receiving these instructions, for, though he loved his country as a good citizen, he also loved and wished to save the ruling dynasty, even at the expense to Napoleon's personal glory, a diminution of which he looked upon as an inevitable and deserved punishment for his faults. But bound by absolute orders, having exhausted every pretext he could devise to defer the fatal term some days beyond the 10th March, he was at length obliged to explain himself. He did so; but when in an elaborate note, which he attempted to read to the plenipotentiaries, he undertook to discuss the preliminaries presented on the 17th February, and to prove that they were a violation of a positive treaty, for the Frankfort bases, formally proposed, had been accepted with equal formality; that the frontiers to which the allies now wished to limit France, deprived her of the relative power which she ought to retain, in order to maintain the balance of power in Europe; that the possession of the left bank of the Rhine was scarcely a sufficient compensation to her for the partition of Poland, the secularisation of the ecclesiastical States, the destruction of the republic of Venice, and the conquests of the English in India;—when, we say, he undertook to expatiate on these considerations, seven or eight of the plenipotentiaries present raised a simultaneous outcry, threatened to break up the meeting, and hear nothing further, if the present plenipotentiary persisted to dilate on such a theme. It was, they said, a counter-project that the Duke de Vicence was to present, and not a critique; it was a counter-project he had promised, and for which they had patiently waited a month—which they were commissioned to demand, with orders to leave off if they did not obtain it.

M. de Caulaincourt did all in his power to calm and induce them to accept his note. He only succeeded, after enduring the most bitter recriminations, and on promising to present a counter-project, and that within twenty-four hours.

Effectively, on the 15th, M. de Caulaincourt presented a counter-project conformable to the bases we have quoted. After enumerating the sacrifices we were ready to make, in a manner calculated to make the most of our concessions—such, for example, as the surrender of Westphalia, Holland, Illyria, Italy, and Spain—the document further stated that France consented

that Holland should be restored to a prince of the house of Orange, with an increase of territory (this increase was no other than the restitution of Dutch Brabant); that Germany should be organised in the manner already proposed by the plenipotentiaries—*that is to say, the States should be rendered independent and united by a federal bond;* Italy, too, was to be free, with the exception that Austria was to hold possessions there, whilst France would retire to the Alps, it being always understood that Prince Eugène and the Princess Eliza were to be allowed an appanage; lastly, that the Pope was to return to Rome, and Ferdinand VII. to Madrid. France was also willing that England should keep Malta and the greater part of her acquisitions. But this detailed enumeration of the concessions made by France naturally implied that she intended to keep the Rhine and the Alps—that is to say, Antwerp, Cologne, Mayence, Chambéry, and Nice, as she did not expressly say she was willing to give them up.

On this occasion M. de Caulaincourt was not interrupted by the plenipotentiaries, for he had fulfilled the condition of presenting a counter-project; he was listened to in frigid silence, but without any expression of astonishment. Scarcely was the reading of the document finished when the plenipotentiaries rose, and after formally acknowledging the presentation of our counter-project, announced they were about to send it to the headquarters of the allied sovereigns; they also announced that the negotiations might be now looked upon as definitively broken off, and that within forty-eight hours they would leave Chatillon. The English, and especially Lord Aberdeen, who, during the entire proceedings, had always observed the strictest politeness, assured M. de Caulaincourt that they deeply regretted not being able to conclude peace on the conditions they had proposed, which would have prevented the effusion of blood, to which they could now see no end; that on these conditions they would have treated honestly with Napoleon; that they would even have recognised him as emperor, which England had not yet done. These declarations, which bore the stamp of perfect sincerity, profoundly affected M. de Caulaincourt, who, not having been able to secure the grandeur of the empire, had wished at least to save the empire itself. This illustrious citizen, who had represented France after Jena and Friedland, and had been loaded with the caresses of trembling Europe, was, in his present grief, which he could not conceal, a striking example of the fickleness of fortune, an example which the plenipotentiaries ought to have looked upon with lively fear. But diplomatists are not more philosophic than other men—the present intoxicates them, so that they forget the past and the future!

The counter-project, presented on the 15th March, was to be

answered at latest within two days—that is to say, on the 17th —and the congress was to be dissolved on the 18th. M. de Caulaincourt sent the reply immediately to Napoleon at Reims.

Napoleon had anticipated this, and had taken his resolution. Having arrived at Reims on the evening of the 13th, he resolved to pass the 14th, 15th, 16th, and perhaps the 17th, there, in order to allow his troops some repose, and to fuse some into certain corps organised too hastily at Paris, and to take cognisance of the proceedings of the allies before definitely determining on his own. Though his second movement against the army of Silesia had not been as successful as the first, though he had been deceived in his hopes by the loss of Soissons, and by the result of the battles of Craonne and Laon, still Blucher had been severely chastised, and Prince Schwarzenberg, though he had come from the Aube to the Seine, had not dared to advance beyond Nogent. This prince seemed to hesitate to take another step until Napoleon should have more fully revealed his designs. At length, the battle of Reims, a small indemnification for the most bitter disappointments, had, however, produced a most strong impression on the allies. Napoleon did not therefore consider himself conquered, and he still waited some false move on the part of his adversaries, to rush upon them with the rapidity of lightning.

The plan which he still preferred to any other was to advance towards the fortresses, collect the garrisons, and intercept the enemy's lines of communication. He was much encouraged to pursue this plan by the arrival at Reims of General Janssens, with five or six thousand men, drawn from the fortresses of the Ardennes, who, combined into a compact corps, had scathlessly traversed the invaded provinces. Napoleon had already, as we have seen, ordered General Maison to withdraw from Lille, Valenciennes, and Mons, in fact, from all the Belgic fortresses, whatever troops were not indispensably necessary to guard the walls during a few days; of these he was to form a small army, and join the troops coming from Antwerp. He ordered Carnot, who still held the English in check before Antwerp, to keep with him only the marines and the most recently organised battalions, and to send his best men, to the number of about six thousand, to General Maison. He had ordered General Merle to leave Maestricht and the fortresses on the Meuse. He commanded Generals Durutte and Morand to leave Metz and Mayence (orders that had been received and were about being executed). In this manner he reckoned on being able to draw from the fortresses from Antwerp to Mayence about fifty thousand men. He had no need to go to Mayence or to Metz to collect these diverse detachments; a simple movement on the Upper Marne, through Chalons, Vitry, and Joinville—a

movement that would not draw him far from the circle of his operations—would enable him to collect this reinforcement, and joined to the troops he already had between the Seine and the Marne, would raise his army to one hundred thousand men, and besides, place him in the rear of his enemies, which was the most certain way to draw them to a distance from Paris. To this great design there were, however, two important objections—the want of defensive works round Paris, and the moral condition of this great city. Napoleon, as we have said, had, through fear of alarming the population, deferred to the last moment the erection of the necessary works. Around the capital of France, where now rise eleven or twelve leagues of walls and sixteen citadels, there were not even earthen redoubts. Some palisaded batteries in front of the gates were the only works that had been erected. Twelve thousand men of the national guards, selected amongst the most peaceful and least stirring citizens, and fifteen or twenty thousand men from the depôts, with a numerous artillery force, composed the garrison. These forces, headed by an energetic commander, would have been sufficient to resist the enemy for some days, especially if the inhabitants of the suburbs could have been supplied with muskets. But the moral state of the capital presented the great difficulties of the defence. The inhabitants, divided between hatred for foreigners and detestation of a despotism which, after twenty years of victory, now brought armed Europe before the gates of the capital, were ready to side with the first occupant, and a party of clever malcontents could, as soon as the enemy appeared, become the active instruments of a revolution already effected in the minds of the people. This was the weak point of the empire, more dangerous than that created by an almost annihilated military power. Had Napoleon been a legitimate prince, that is to say, the descendant of an ancient dynasty, or a wise prince who had preserved the confidence of the country, he might have seen the enemy enter Paris, as Frederick the Great had beheld a similar event in Berlin, without being involved in irreparable misfortune. For him, on the contrary, the entrance of foreigners into his capital, facilitated by the want of defensive works, was not a military reverse, but the almost certain cause of a revolution.

These were undoubtedly grave objections against any plan that involved Napoleon's further removal from Paris; but the system of fighting alternately against Blucher and Schwarzenberg, in the angle formed by the Seine and the Marne, having become almost impracticable—firstly, because the enemy was too clearly aware of the design; and secondly, because Napoleon having retired to the extremity of the angle, the two adverse armies in approaching him would be fused into one—a change

of tactics was therefore absolutely necessary, and no plan was better than that which, increasing his army by 50,000 men, placed him in the rear of the enemy. Having no choice, Napoleon tried to persuade himself that the political danger was not so great; that the Parisians would not dare to throw off his authority; and besides, having his brothers at their head, they would be able to defend themselves. He did not picture to himself then, because he had not experienced it, how great is the irresolution and weakness of the public mind when a government is morally undermined, and its popularity departed. Whether through necessity, or blinded by self-illusion, he adopted the project, so admirably planned in a military sense, of marching towards the fortresses. To secure the success of this plan, it was only necessary that Paris should hold out five or six days.

However, before commencing this daring manuœvre, Napoleon wished to give a few days' rest to his troops, to make some indispensable arrangements, and see whether he could not, before withdrawing still further from Paris, fall on the rear of one of the invading armies, that of Bohemia for example, which, having taken up a position at Nogent, already presented a flank towards him. It was thus the four days passed at Reims, from the 14th to the 17th March, had been employed. He had left General Charpentier at Soissons, with some débris sufficient to defend the place; he had reorganised, by fusing them together, the four divisions of the young guard, composing the corps of Victor and Ney; he had ordered to be sent from Paris, under the conduct of Lefebvre-Desnoettes, about 3000 or 4000 of the young guard, 2000 mounted horse soldiers of the same corps, the miserable remnant of the Polish troops, a new reserve division composed of national guards drilled in the depôts, and lastly, an immense park of artillery. This reinforcement would supply him with 12,000 additional men. He had already received nearly 6000 from the fortresses of the Ardennes, under General Janssens, and with these different reinforcements it would be possible for him to raise his army to 60,000 men. If to these he joined the corps of Macdonald, Oudinot, and Gerard, he would have 85,000 combatants under his command; and the number would be increased to 135,000, should his march towards the fortresses be as successful as he hoped.

The repose accorded to his troops having appeared to him sufficient, and his arrangements being completed, he resolved to leave Reims on the morning of the 17th, and repair to Epernay, in order to judge better of what he ought to do under existing circumstances. Paris had two causes of alarm—the renewed approach of Prince Schwarzenberg, whose vanguard had reached Provins; and what had befallen the army of Spain

between Bayonne and Bordeaux. Posted on the banks of the Marne at Epernay, Napoleon would see whether it would be better to fall immediately on Prince Schwarzenberg's rear, and arrest his advance towards the capital, or persevere in the project of marching towards the fortresses. His arrangements were made the evening before with a view to these two objects, for whilst bringing up the mass of his forces on Epernay, he sent Ney with the infantry of the young guard to Chalons. If he wished to advance on the fortresses, he had only to direct his corps to follow Ney in the direction of Chalons, or, on the contrary, to make them fall back towards Fère-Champenoise, if he decided on attacking Prince Schwarzenberg. Ney, who was in the van, would not have a greater distance to march to Fère-Champenoise, whether he went there from Chalons or from Epernay.

Having left Reims on the morning of the 17th, Napoleon reached Epernay the same evening. He left Mortier at Reims, to second Marmont in the defence of Berry-au-Bac, and gave both an injunction to hold Blucher in check for some days by successively disputing the passages of the Aisne and the Marne. When Napoleon reached Epernay, he learned that Prince Schwarzenberg had advanced far beyond the Seine. The latter was now so far advanced in the direction of Paris, that to fall upon his rear seemed a well-directed *coup de main*, as important as that of Montmirail, and politically necessary on account of the consternation prevailing in the capital. In fact, the Parisians were calling aloud for Napoleon, for they could not behold foreign bayonets approaching their gates without invoking the aid of his arm. The events at Bayonne and Bordeaux had added to the terror of the Parisians. These events, very serious, as we shall soon see, had inspired the enemies of the government with enthusiastic hopes, which ought to be immediately crushed. Napoleon, influenced by these motives, did not hesitate to set out for Fère-Champenoise, in order to pass from the Marne to the Seine. On the morning of the 18th the entire army marched in that direction.

Before following the emperor in this new series of operations, we shall briefly retrace the events that had just occurred on the Spanish frontiers, and which had so powerfully disturbed the public mind. Marshal Soult had continued to occupy the Adour with his right wing, and the Gave d'Oleron with his centre and left, whilst Lord Wellington had not yet made up his mind to move forward. But the English general having received the means of satisfying the wants of the Spaniards, had commenced offensive operations with eight English, two Portuguese, and four Spanish divisions. He ordered two English and two Spanish divisions to blockade Bayonne, then

with the remainder, about sixty thousand men, he marched against Marshal Soult, who had abandoned the Gave d'Oleron, and had taken up a position at the Gave de Pau, in the neighbourhood of Orthez.

Marshal Soult, after having left an entire division at Bayonne (independent of the garrison), after having sent Napoleon two infantry divisions and several cavalry brigades, had still six divisions of infantry and one of cavalry, amounting in all to 40,000 veteran soldiers. If this number was not sufficient to secure a victory, which might be more difficult as the English were present, it was at least sufficient to dispute the country inch by inch, and cover Bordeaux. Bordeaux was at this moment the capital of the south. There prevailed there, besides the discontent peculiar to maritime cities whose commerce had been cut off, during twenty years, a religious and royalist spirit, common to all the southern provinces; so that every sentiment most opposed to the imperial régime obtained at Bordeaux. The Duke d'Angoulême, son of the Count d'Artois, and nephew of Louis XVIII., had hastened to the Spanish frontier, but had not been received by Lord Wellington, thanks to the care taken by the English to deprive this war of all appearance of a dynastic question. But he hovered in the rear of the head-quarters, and his appearance caused an extraordinary agitation in the country, a feeling not exhibited in Franche-Comté and in Lorraine, where the arrival of the Count d'Artois had not produced any sensation. Numerous royalist emissaries had already appeared at Bordeaux, and a single movement of the enemy would suffice to produce an explosion.

These were the causes that had decided Napoleon to leave so large a portion of his troops between Bayonne and Bordeaux, and which ought to have induced, on the part of his lieutenant, the most energetic efforts to stop the progress of the English army. On this account Napoleon had frequently recommended Marshal Soult to display the greatest vigour, and do as he was doing—that is to say, to be the first and last under fire; for when he required unlimited devotedness from his troops, the best means of obtaining it was to give the example.

On the 26th February, Marshal Soult took up his position a little in the rear of Orthez, on the heights that border the Gave de Pau, having on his right General Reille, in the centre Count d'Erlon, and on the left, at Orthez, General Clausel, each with two divisions. The latter covered the route of Sault de Navailles. The cavalry watched the banks of the Gave. Each wing was drawn up in two lines, the second ready to support the first.

On the morning of the 27th February, Lord Wellington passed the Gave, and attacked with five English divisions the French right wing, commanded by General Reille; whilst at

the opposite extremity General Hill, with an English division and some Portuguese and Spanish troops, attacked General Clausel at Orthez. The contest was long and violent, and General Reille on the right, as General Clausel on the left wing, worthily sustained the honour of our arms. General Clausel had maintained his position at Orthez without yielding an inch; and General Reille, obliged to fall back upon a second position, was nevertheless certain of being able to keep his place, if by a vigorous use of the second lines the battle was recommenced against an enemy visibly exhausted. The French might, it is true, be conquered after this new effort, as our sole reserve consisted, besides the divisions engaged, of General Paris' brigade, composed of the residue of all the other corps. It might also happen that the French would conquer, and in that case the result would be important. These are questions whose solution depends on temperament, for the mind becomes confused in the consideration. Marshal Soult, considering that this was the only army that remained in the south of the empire, had thought it wiser to retire, and had effected his retreat on Sault de Navailles, after having killed or wounded 6000 of Lord Wellington's troops, and left 3000 or 4000 on the field of battle. The French had retired in admirable order, and inspired the enemy with a feeling of profound respect.

But Soult had abandoned valuable territory, and that, too, at the close of a day which, without being a lost battle, would have all the appearances of one; for the enemy would be authorised to call it so, as it enabled them to advance, and because the ill-disposed populations of the south would give it no other designation. After this battle of Orthez, there was not a point where the French could rest until they reached the Garonne. Bordeaux would be left unprotected, and the great political interests to which Napoleon had sacrificed 40,000 men—who, had they been brought up to the Seine, might have saved the empire—were about to be compromised. There was only one resource: it was that Marshal Soult should make Bordeaux the basis of his operations, and the terminus of his retreat. He would in this case be obliged to fight another battle at the risk of being beaten; and afterwards, beaten or not, he would be obliged to fall back on Bordeaux, establish a vast camp around this city, and defend himself as General Carnot was doing at Antwerp. It is true that Bordeaux had not the walls of Antwerp; but it had better—it had a noble army that, making this city the base of operation, ought to be invincible. Should Soult's army only hold its position fifteen or twenty days, it would be sufficient to give Napoleon time to decide the fate of the war between Paris and Langres.

Marshal Soult, fearing encounters with the English, which

had always been unfortunate (thanks, it must be said, to our generals and not to our soldiers), had thought proper to manœuvre, and instead of covering Bordeaux directly, to go up towards Toulouse, thinking that the English would not dare to advance on Bordeaux whilst he was on their flanks and rear. Such calculations, very rational on the part of Napoleon, of whom the enemy was afraid, were not so well suited to his lieutenants, who were far from inspiring the same amount of alarm. Events soon proved this. In fact, Lord Wellington, who, by summoning to him a portion of the troops stationed round Bayonne, had under his command more than seventy thousand men, despatched ten or twelve thousand towards Bordeaux, a sufficient number to incite insurrection in that city, and kept sixty thousand men to pursue Marshal Soult in the direction of Toulouse. This he did not fail to do. Whilst Marshal Soult took the road to Tarbes, Lord Wellington despatched Marshal Beresford from Mont-de-Marson, with a column of English and Portuguese troops, and the latter, finding Bordeaux defenceless, on the 12th March, the general and the prefect, who had at most twelve hundred men under their command, retired to the Dordogne, and the royalists of Bordeaux, seconded by the merchants, who were impatient for the re-establishment of commerce, called aloud for the restoration of the Bourbons. The Duke d'Angoulême hastened to the city, and the restoration of the ancient dynasty was proclaimed in presence of the English, who did nothing, hindered nothing; contenting themselves with repeating that the home government of France did not touch them, that they had only one mission—to provide the means of subsistence for their troops, and guarantee the safety of those amongst the inhabitants who trusted to their honour. Count Lynch (the Mayor of Bordeaux), putting himself at the head of the movement, made a proclamation in which he announced the re-establishment of the Bourbons, and seemed to say it was for the purpose of restoring her legitimate princes to France that the allied powers had taken arms. Lord Wellington, following his instructions as closely as though they were a military watchword, wrote to the Duke d'Angoulême to protest against the Mayor of Bordeaux's proclamation, and to declare that the overthrow of one dynasty or the re-establishment of another was not by any means the object of the allied powers, a fact which he would himself be obliged to explain before the public, if the Bourbons did not retract the assertions they had ventured to make.

This was carrying a respect for appearances too far, when in reality the allies did desire what the Mayor of Bordeaux had announced. However this may be, it was not less true that the enemy, taking advantage of a false move of Marshal Soult,

had entered Bordeaux, which had been left unprotected, and furnished the royalists a favourable opportunity of proclaiming the restoration of the Bourbons in the south of France. The example was one of serious import, and might provoke imitation. It seems to us, who can reason calmly fifty years after the event, that this ought to have been enough to determine Napoleon not to quit the vicinity of Paris. But besides that Napoleon did not know to what point he had alienated the hearts of the people by his system of continual war, he was overruled and rendered powerless by the impossibility of long disputing the possession of Paris outside the walls, and the necessity of going to seek his last resources on the frontiers. But even before executing this movement, he resolved, as we have just seen, to make a violent attack on Prince Schwarzenberg's flank, in order to draw the Austrian general towards him, or at least retard his march on the capital. This was the cause of Napoleon's sending his troops in the direction of Fère-Champenoise. He arrived there on the evening of the 18th, and on the way the cavalry of the guard, falling in with Kaisarow's Cossacks, cut them in pieces and threw them back on the Seine. They bivouacked at Fère-Champenoise and in the neighbourhood.

The next day, the 19th, Napoleon, after deliberating whether he would march on Arcis or Plancy, advanced towards this latter point, because all reports concurred in representing Prince Schwarzenberg as already arrived at Provins, and Napoleon thought that by drawing nearer to Provins he would have a better chance of finding himself in the midst of the scattered columns of the army of Bohemia.

But in reasoning thus Napoleon was not fully aware of the last movements of the enemy. Encouraged by the results of Craonne and Laon, Prince Schwarzenberg had at first sent on a vanguard as far as Provins, without having determined to attempt anything decisive, for, besides his customary prudence, he was restrained by a fit of gout. But no sooner was he informed of the battle of Reims, than he dreaded some fresh enterprise on Napoleon's part, and hastily returned to Nogent. Besides, the Emperor Alexander, uneasy at learning there were fresh troops at Chalons (Ney's troops had been seen advancing towards this city), began to fear that Napoleon, turning from Chalons on Arcis, might attack the mass of the allied armies in the rear, and hastened from Troyes to communicate his fears to Prince Schwarzenberg, whose headquarters were between Nogent and Méry. The Austrian generalissimo, generally less daring in his projects than the Emperor Alexander, was also less easily disturbed, and without being so persuaded as the Russian monarch of the imminence of the danger, recalled his too-scattered troops to Troyes on the 18th, with the intention

of concentrating them at Bar-sur-Aube, in order that he might not remain exposed to a flank movement of his formidable adversary.

Thus on the 19th, whilst Napoleon, at the head of his cavalry, was advancing in full gallop on Plancy, Marshal de Wrède, who had been left to guard the Aube and the Seine, between Arcis, Plancy, and Anglure, was retreating to Arcis, Wittgenstein's corps (now called Rajeffsky's), those of Prince de Wurtemberg and General Giulay, were falling back on Troyes, and the reserves, under Barclay de Tolly, were being concentred between Brienne and Troyes.

Napoleon, in debouching by Plancy, had gone a little too much to the right, that is to say, a little too much towards Paris, and was soon convinced of his mistake in seeing the retrograde march of the different columns of the army of Bohemia. Nevertheless, knowing by experience that by throwing himself boldly into the midst of the retreating troops there was greater probability of gaining great advantages than of encountering strong resistance, he unhesitatingly crossed the bridge of Plancy with the cavalry of the guard, and after passing the Aube, advanced on the Seine. He left General Sebastiani, with the Colbert and Exelmans divisions, on his left, to observe the enemy in the direction of Arcis, and with Letort's cavalry of the old guard he proceeded directly to the bridge of Méry, on the Seine. Méry being occupied by the enemy, Letort crossed the Seine at a ford higher up, and fell on Prince de Wurtemberg's rearguard. He sabred some hundreds, and effected a capture of great value, that of a pontoon train belonging to the army of Bohemia. If Napoleon had been in possession of this instrument of war a month earlier, he might possibly have freed himself from all his enemies. A pontoon train had been sent him from Paris, but so cumbrous as to be useless. He was therefore delighted to get possession of a well-constructed portable bridge, light and easy of transportation. After this daring reconnaissance, Napoleon left Letort in the direction of Méry, with orders to pursue the retreating columns of the enemy, recrossed the Seine in person, and slept at Plancy, on the Aube.

This day the relative position of the armies was rendered clear. Prince Schwarzenberg was retiring in great haste, through the mere fear of finding the French army on his right flank: what would his alarm be did he suppose the emperor in his rear? The Paris route was now freed from the presence of the enemy, and Napoleon resolved to profit of this, as well as of the small amount of firmness displayed by Prince Schwarzenberg, to resume the execution of his project of advancing on the fortresses, collecting the garrisons, and having thus doubled his

forces, take a position in the rear of the enemy. It seemed a well-founded hypothesis that Prince Schwarzenberg, already retreating, would accelerate his pace, when Napoleon arrived at Vitry, at St. Dizier, at Toul, and at Nancy; and certainly Blucher would not advance when Schwarzenberg would be retreating.*

Consequently Napoleon made the following arrangements. He ordered Marshals Oudinot and Macdonald, and General Gerard, who were now freed from the presence of the enemy, to retrace their steps through Provins, Villenauxe, Anglure, and Plancy, and join him at Arcis by the right bank of the Aube. Ney, advancing to Arcis, along the same bank, would arrive there on the same day as the young guard, and Friant at the same time as the old. Napoleon resolved to repair to Arcis himself, on the morning of the 20th, with the cavalry of the guard, remounting the Aube by the left bank. After having rallied Ney, Friant, Oudinot, Macdonald, Gerard, round Arcis, and gathered en marche some spoils of the enemy; after having received the convoys sent from Paris under Lefebvre-Desnoettes, he intended to advance straight from the Aube to the Marne, and go to Vitry, St. Dizier, perhaps even to Bar-le-Duc. Marshals Mortier and Marmont, who had been left at Reims and at Berry-au-Bac, could easily join him by Chalons, and Napoleon gave them orders to that effect. Everything was ordered so that Napoleon was to advance on the fortresses with 70,000 men. Having made these arrangements, Napoleon wrote to Paris, saying what he was about to do. He recommended every one to preserve a cool self-possession, and exhibited great confidence himself. This confidence was partly affected and partly sincere, for he fully understood the skilfulness of his plans, and had little doubt of their success.

The next day, the 20th March, a day more than once memorable in the course of his life, Napoleon left Plancy to retrace his course along the left bank of the Aube, with a portion of his cavalry. Letort had left another portion round Méry to seize baggage and prisoners. General Sebastiani, with the Colbert and Exelmans divisions, had made the first move and advanced on Arcis. In his extreme confidence Napoleon had not deigned to recross the Aube and advance under cover; he marched on Arcis by the same route he had traced for the different detachments of his cavalry.

Having arrived at Arcis about the middle of the day (Arcis-sur-Aube), he found General Sebastiani very thoughtful, in consequence of what he had seen en route. Marshal Ney, who had just arrived with his infantry along the right bank of the

* I take these details from the correspondence of Napoleon, where we find retraced day by day, and hour by hour, his resolutions and his movements.

Aube, appeared quite as anxious as General Sebastiani. Both, after having repulsed the Bavarian vanguards, thought they perceived between the Aube and the Seine, that is to say, between Arcis and Troyes, the entire army of Bohemia. If it were so, they had no time to lose in quitting Arcis, which is on the left bank of the Aube, and cross to the right, and put this river between them and the enemy. Though by the union of all the troops ordered to repair to Arcis the French would number 70,000, that is to say, when Oudinot, Macdonald, Gerard, and Lefebvre would have arrived, and 84,000 at Vitry when Mortier and Marmont would have joined, still at the actual moment they did not amount to more than 20,000. There were 5000 cavalry of the guard; Ney brought from 9000 to 10,000 infantry of the young guard, and Friant 5000 to 6000 of the old. There were not sufficient to resist Prince Schwarzenberg's 90,000 soldiers concentrated between Arcis and Troyes.

Napoleon, who had seen from Méry Schwarzenberg's columns in retreat, could not imagine that this prince would think of halting between Troyes and Arcis to risk a battle there. A slight reconnaissance made on the Troyes route by a young officer confirmed his opinion, and induced him to post Ney's infantry in advance of Arcis, a little to the left, at Grand-Torcy; he at the same time sent messengers along the other bank of the Aube, to hasten the arrival of his old guard and Lefebvre-Desnoettes, whose approach was announced. The latter was bringing about 6000 men. In this attitude Napoleon resolved to await events, which could not fail to occur within a few hours. And effectively, affairs shortly assumed an alarming aspect.

Prince Schwarzenberg, though not rash, possessed the firmness of an old soldier, and after having made his principal corps fall back from Nogent on Troyes, he could not, with 90,000 men, retreat further before 30,000 or 40,000, the number he believed Napoleon to command. Besides, he was weary of the insinuations and continual boasting of the Prussians, and he wished to prove that he was as capable as they of encountering the terrible Emperor of the French. He therefore resolved to turn to the right, advance on Arcis, and accept battle if offered, and thus prevent the French in any case from falling on Troyes and making fresh captures. With this view he ordered the Bavarians to advance from his right on Arcis; he sent the Rajeffsky, Wurtemberg, and Giulay corps straight forward on Arcis, and connected these two masses by the guards and reserve corps. About two o'clock he found himself before Arcis.

General Sebastiani, piqued by some expressions of Napoleon,

who had not treated his fears seriously, dashed along the Troyes route with a few squadrons, to ascertain more clearly what he thought he had seen the first time. The ground beyond Arcis, in the direction of Troyes, being deeply undulated, is capable of concealing great numbers of troops. General Sebastiani, having crossed the first risings of the ground, perceived the Bavarian and Austrian cavalry advancing en masse, and returned in full gallop to communicate the intelligence to Napoleon. The Colbert and Exelmans divisions were immediately ordered to take horse to oppose the enemy. General Kaisarow, at the head of several thousand cavalry, charged the Colbert division, which scarcely amounted to 700 or 800, and flung them back on the Exelmans division, that, overborne by the shock, was obliged to yield. All together, pursuers and pursued, arrived *pêle-mêle* at Arcis. Ney was on the left at Grand-Torcy, with the infantry of the young guard. Between Grand-Torcy and Arcis there were at most three or four battalions, amongst which was one Polish, commanded by Skrzynecki, the same who has since, in 1830, so nobly and bravely defended the interests of expiring Poland. This battalion had only time to form in square to receive Napoleon, and protect him from the threatening masses of the enemy. The Poles, proud of the precious deposit defended by their bayonets, remained firm under a shower of shells and the repeated assaults of innumerable squadrons. But Napoleon did not long avail himself of the asylum he had found with the Poles. The first shock of the adverse cavalry being abated, Napoleon issued from the square, hurried towards Arcis, at the risk of being made prisoner, stopped, rallied his flying cavalry, and led them himself against the enemy. Our squadrons, into whom the presence of the emperor infused new life, charged with the greatest vigour, and succeeded in restraining, without being able entirely to repulse, the superior numbers of the Bavarian and Austrian cavalry. During this time Ney, stationed in the Grand-Torcy, was preparing to make every effort to resist the army of Bohemia. The main object was to hold out till the old guard, whose columns were already visible on the other bank of the Aube, should have crossed that river and occupied Arcis. When the 6000 old soldiers composing this select troop should have arrived before Arcis, and joined Ney's 10,000 young soldiers that were defending the Grand-Torcy, the French might be reassured. But these troops had not yet arrived.

Meanwhile, Ney sustained furious assaults at Torcy. Marshal de Wrède's corps had fallen into line, and his right, composed of Austrians, attacked Grand-Torcy, whilst he tried to throw his left, composed of Bavarians, between that village and the little city of Arcis. All the Russian, Prussian, and Austrian

reserves, comprising the guards, the grenadiers, and the cuirassiers, were engaged in this attack. We were opposed by more than forty thousand infantry, without reckoning hordes of cavalry.

Ney defended Grand-Torcy with his accustomed energy. His troops, stationed in the houses and behind the barricaded streets of the village, arrested by a determined fire the masses of Austrian infantry. Overpowered for a moment by numbers, he was driven from Grand-Torcy, but putting himself at the head of some battalions, and making a desperate charge with fixed bayonets, he re-entered the village, and succeeded in keeping his position. Meanwhile, Napoleon, traversing incessantly the space between Arcis and Torcy, to encourage the troops by his presence, was for a moment in imminent danger of terminating his wondrous career. A bomb fell in front of a battalion of young soldiers, little accustomed to such a spectacle, and the men nearest to the flaming projectile drew back a step. Napoleon drove his horse straight to the bomb, to teach them contempt of danger. At this instant the bomb bursts, and he is wrapped in flames and smoke; the next moment he issues from the fiery cloud in perfect safety; but his horse is wounded, and he throws himself on another, amid the enthusiastic cries of his young soldiers.

Thanks to these acts of heroic rashness, we kept our position. At length the old guard crosses the bridge of Arcis, under the conduct of the intrepid Friant. Napoleon in person drew them up before the town. The assistance was timely, for at this moment the Russian guard, having fallen into line, came to the aid of Marshal de Wrède. A last attack, still more violent than the preceding, is attempted against Grand-Torcy. Ney displayed impenetrable firmness, and repulsed the assailants.

At the same time that this reinforcement of veteran infantry arrived so àpropos, Lefebvre-Desnoettes, who had left Paris to join the army, debouched by the bridge of Arcis, at the head of 2000 horse, with which he had preceded his infantry. General Sebastiani, now at the head of 4000 cavalry, deploys in the plain of Arcis, which ascends slightly towards the enemy's position. He is preparing to take revenge. His squadrons, charging fiercely, overthrow those of Kaisarow, drive them back on those of Frimont, and avenge the skirmish of the morning. But soon the Bavarian cavalry appears, together with the heavy Russian horse, and prudence counsels a retreat on Arcis. The day is now drawing to a close; Ney still keeps his position at Grand-Torcy, the old guard at Arcis, the cavalry placed between. The French have escaped the disaster which, had they displayed less energy, would certainly have befallen them. In fact, we had at first fought with 14,000 men against 40,000, then with 20,000 against 60,000, and lastly, with 22,000 or 23,000 against

90,000, for on our right the corps of Giulay, Wurtemberg, and Rajeffsky had debouched from Nozay, and began to take part in the combat, when night separated the two armies.

At a distance on our right an episode occurred which might have had disagreeable consequences, but for the rare valour of the cavalry of the guard. We have said that the horse chasseurs and grenadiers had been left beyond the bridge of Méry, on the left of the Seine, with the booty captured on the previous evening, comprising the pontoon train. These troops having left Méry in the morning with this pontoon train, tried to join the main army by marching directly from Méry to Arcis, through Premier-Fait. They naturally fell into the midst of the cavalry corps of Rajeffsky, Giulay, and Wurtemberg, combined under the command of the Prince of Wurtemberg. Attacked by a force five or six times greater than theirs, they only escaped by displaying extraordinary valour, and fighting during several hours sword in hand. Being at length joined by squadrons from the depôt at Versailles that had advanced by Méry, they fell back on Méry itself, with a loss of not more than a hundred horsemen, and above all, without having sacrificed their pontoon train. The next day they reached Plancy, crossed the Aube, and joined the main body by the right bank of this river, with the corps of Oudinot, Macdonald, and Gerard, that were en marche from Provins to Arcis.

Such was the battle of Arcis-sur-Aube, the last that Napoleon fought in person during this campaign, and in which the soldiers as well as himself performed prodigies of valour. Napoleon believed himself victorious, and he believed it sincerely, for it was a miracle that 20,000 men had resisted forces that had successively increased from 40,000 to 90,000. He was proud of himself and his soldiers, and saw in this possibility of fighting forces so unequal, a guarantee of success to the end of the war. His confidence was now become so great that he was willing to encounter on the morrow all Prince Schwarzenberg's army. However, during the day he could only be joined by Oudinot's corps, and adding to these what Lefebvre-Desnoettes had brought, his forces would at most have numbered only 32,000 men. It would not therefore be prudent to brave the shock of 90,000 soldiers, especially with a river in his rear. He ultimately yielded to the dictates of reason and the advice of his marshals, who insisted that he should put the Aube between him and the enemy. After having kept his troops deployed before Arcis whilst a second bridge was being constructed, he made them suddenly fall back through the streets of this little city, crossed the two bridges, and left Prince Schwarzenberg very much surprised and disappointed at seeing a prey escape that had almost seemed certain. The bridges of the Aube were

broken down, and Marshal Oudinot took possession of the right bank with his corps, supported by a large body of artillery. The enemy, not wishing to allow the French army to escape undisturbed, determined to attempt the passage of the river, and remained during this attempt exposed to a destructive fire. Schwarzenberg lost unprofitably on this day—the 21st—more than 1000 men, for wherever he tried to cross the Aube, Oudinot's well-posted troops received him with a sustained fire of musketry and grape. It is not too much to say that these two days cost the army of Bohemia from 8000 to 9000 men, whilst our loss did not amount to more than 3000, thanks to the smallness of our numbers, and to the advantage of fighting under cover in a defended position.

Amidst these continual vicissitudes of war, Napoleon, finding his army ever heroic and devoted, though often discontented, still confiding in his genius, and with increased faith in the excellence of his tactics, he was far from despairing of his cause, though he did not deceive himself as to his political position. Though he would not acknowledge even to himself to how great a degree he had alienated the affections of the people by his continual wars and his arbitrary government, still he was not blinded to the moral condition of France. Even on the field of Arcis, and amid the roar of battle, conversing with General Sebastiani, a Corsican like himself, and endowed with great political talents—"Well, general," asked the emperor, "what is your opinion of what you see?" "I say," replied the general, "that your majesty has, of course, other resources of which we know nothing." "What you have before your eyes," answered Napoleon, "and nothing more." "But in that case, why does not your majesty call upon the people to rise?" "Chimeras," replied Napoleon, "borrowed from recollections of Spain and the French Revolution! Call upon the people to rise in a country where the Revolution has destroyed the nobles and the priests, and where I have destroyed the Revolution!"

The general remained astounded, admiring this coolness and profundity of thought, and asking himself how genius so vast had not prevented the commission of errors so flagrant.

But the moment was now come to form a definite resolution. Between Arcis and Chalons the Aube and the Marne are only separated by a distance of eleven or twelve leagues. Marmont and Mortier, who had been sent to keep Blucher in check, might delay but could not arrest his progress. The armies of Bohemia and Silesia must soon be united, and then the French troops would be stifled in their grasp. Napoleon, not being able with the forces under his command to beat either of the allied generals separately, unless fortune afforded him favours, which of late she had seldom granted, still less could he defeat them

if combined. To carry out his idea of marching on the garrisons, and so procuring a reinforcement of 50,000 men, and draw the enemy further from Paris, was now his only remaining resource, a resource that, hazardous for him, would have been fatal to another.

He determined to set out on the 21st March for Vitry-on-the-Marne. Taking the route of Sommepins, he could traverse the distance between Arcis and Vitry in two days. From Vitry he could easily reach Bar-le-Duc, and without advancing a step further, he could be joined by the garrisons of Metz, Mayence, Luxemburg, Thionville, Verdun, and Strasburg, to the number of more than 30,000 men. If Napoleon went as far as Metz—a journey he might accomplish in three days—he could, in manœuvring round that place, raise Lorraine, Alsace, Franche-Comté, and receive from the Low Countries 15,000 additional men. He would in this case find himself at Metz, at the head of 120,000 soldiers, in the midst of provinces in arms against the enemy; and if Marshal Suchet, who had replaced Augereau —collecting all the troops he could on his way—returned to Besançon with 40,000 men, the aspect of things would certainly undergo a change.

Napoleon sent to Paris an account of the plan he had adopted, and ordered that all the artillery, battalions of the young guard, and battalions drawn from the depôts, that were not absolutely indispensable to the defence of the capital, should be sent to him. He begged the Parisians not to be disturbed, should the enemy again approach the city, as he said their appearance there could only be for two or three days, for the allies would pursue him when they learned that he was about to cut off their lines of communication. Having renewed his orders to Marmont and Mortier to join him at the Marne by Chalons, he set out for Vitry. He had formerly never quitted the Seine without stationing considerable forces from Nogent to Montereau. It was not so this time, for he was obliged to execute en masse his projected diversion on the rear of the enemy; and it was by this movement alone he hoped to save Paris. Twenty thousand men stationed between Nogent and Paris would not have stopped Prince Schwarzenberg's progress, and their absence might frustrate the success of Napoleon's operations. Still, believing it important to guard the bridges of the Seine, and thinking it possible to check the enemy at these points for some hours—a delay which, under certain circumstances, was not to be despised —he left General Souham, with a mélange of national guards and hastily organised battalions, to defend Nogent, Bray, and Montereau. General Alix, who, with forces of the same character, had so well defended Sens, where he still was, was placed under the orders of General Souham.

The journey from Arcis to Sommepins was effected without difficulty. The French scarcely came in contact with some bands of Cossacks that were hovering between the Aube and the Marne, and pillaging the country, desolated as it was. The corps of Oudinot, Macdonald, and Gerard, that had marched from Provins to Arcis, along the Aube, defended that river at the bridge of Arcis, and defiled unmolested in sight of the enemy.

Napoleon, on the night of the 21st, slept at Sommepins, with a part of the army; next day—the 22nd—he marched towards Vitry with a vanguard. Vitry had been put in a state of defence by the army of Silesia, and was then occupied by 5000 or 6000 Prussians and Russians protected by earthworks. Napoleon, not wishing to risk a terrible loss of life for a post that was of no great importance, sent to seek a ford between Vitry and St. Dizier. One was discovered at Frignicourt, where he crossed with his cavalry and Ney's division of the young guard. He left a detachment to guard this ford, and passed the night at the Chateau du Plessis, near Orconte. He despatched the light infantry of General Piré to St. Dizier, where they forced an entrance, and captured two Prussian battalions.

The next day—the 23rd—Napoleon though it advisable to remain at St. Dizier, and await there his remaining forces, for Oudinot, Macdonald, and Gerard were *en arrière*, and Marmont and Mortier had orders to join him by Chalons. It was also necessary to wait General Pacthod's division of the national guards, that had behaved admirably with Oudinot and Macdonald, and had been left at Sézanne to escort a last convoy of troops and materials of war. Still, having some doubts as to the possibility of receiving this last transport, Napoleon ordered the war minister to watch over its safety, and even bring it back to Paris if he feared it might not reach Vitry through the opposing mass of enemies.

Without losing a moment, Napoleon directed his light cavalry on Bar-le-Duc, with directions to seize the bridge of St. Mihiel, on the Meuse, and that of Pont-à-Mousson, on the Moselle; he sent fresh orders to all the garrisons to join him; he was preparing to spare them half the distance by making one or two days' march to meet them—he would thus see his troops increase every hour. Independent of the Marshals Mortier and Marmont, independent of the Sézanne convoy, of which he had only received a part, and even deducting the losses at Arcis, and the troops left to guard the bridges of the Seine, he had about 55,000 men. He would have 70,000 when the two marshals joined, 80,000 when the Sézanne depôt arrived, and his troops would gradually amount to 100,000 and more, if the different garrisons succeeded in joining him. Though he fully

appreciated the difficulty of his position, he was still confident in the success of his tactics, and on the 23rd March, in a letter to the war minister, which breathed an imperturbable coolness, he gave an account of his march, of his motives for not attacking Vitry, and his project of approaching Metz, to draw from that and other garrisons a considerable reinforcement; the certainty of alarming the enemy by cutting off their lines of communication; the dejection of the greater part of the allies, who had never obtained any serious advantage over the French troops, and who had recently experienced enormous losses at Arcis-sur-Aube, and almost regretted having advanced so far; his consequent hope of shortly bringing about new and important events; the utility of watching over the Sézanne transport, and even increasing it, if circumstances permitted; the possibility of recurring to the conscription of 1815, for in Champagne and Lorraine the peasantry was rising en masse, and the urgency of making prompt use of this resource; the importance of inducing Marmont and Mortier, who had fallen back on Chateau-Thierry, to advance and join the main body of the army; and lastly, his confidence, spite of all the difficulties of his position, of soon saving France and himself in this terrible crisis. Nobody would have suspected in reading this letter, the last addressed to the war minister, that Napoleon was on the verge of an awful catastrophe.

At this very time M. de Caulaincourt arrived at the emperor's headquarters; he had just quitted the congress at Chatillon. This devoted servant of his king and his country had, as we have seen, presented a counter-project, in order to satisfy the reiterated demands of the allied plenipotentiaries, and had endeavoured to render the reading of the document supportable to his auditors, deviating, at the same time, as little as possible from Napoleon's instructions. The plenipotentiaries of the allied powers, after listening in glacial silence to the French counter-project, and after receiving orders from their sovereigns, had read, on the 18th March, a formal note, in which they declared that France having again proposed all the conditions, already declared unacceptable by Europe, the conferences were finally broken off, and that war would be prosecuted *à outrance*, until France would admit, purely and simply, the preliminaries of the 17th February. To this declaration M. de Metternich added a private letter for M. de Caulaincourt, in which he begged him once more to think seriously before quitting the place appointed for holding the congress—"For," he said, "the France of Louis XIV., augmented by the conquests of Louis XV., was of some value, and ought not to be longer staked at the dangerous game of battles." However great might be the temptation of the French plenipotentiary to

follow this advice, he dared not outstep his instructions to the degree that would have retained the members of the congress at Chatillon. He left the plenipotentiaries the next day—the 19th—and on the 20th the different legations set out for the headquarters of the belligerent armies.

M. de Caulaincourt found some difficulty in rejoining Napoleon, whom he found at St. Dizier. The return of the French plenipotentiary produced a painful impression on the French soldiers, for it annihilated every hope founded on negotiations, and left them no prospect but war unto death with the allies. If the battles of Montmirail, of Champaubert, and Montereau had raised the hopes of the soldiers to a level with those of Napoleon, the battles of Craonne, of Laon, of Arcis-sur-Aube, had quickly brought them down from this elevation, and the daring system of tactics that the emperor was now attempting at a distance from Paris, a system of tactics which few were capable of appreciating, astonished and troubled minds already deeply disturbed. The noble and stern countenance of M. de Caulaincourt, more sad than usual, was little calculated to smooth the thoughtful brows he met at headquarters. Napoleon received his minister in a friendly manner, like a man who felt no ill humour, because he experienced no emotion. The return of his legate, however, produced a certain impression on his mind, but it was only transient, and he soon overcame it. He was at table, supping with Berthier, when M. de Caulaincourt arrived. "You do well to return," he said, "for I will not deny that, had you accepted the ultimatum of the allies, I would have disowned you. Better for you and me to avoid such a rupture. At bottom these people are not sincere. Had you yielded, they would have soon asked more. They spread a report that their enmity is against me, and not against France. All lies! Their enmity is against me because they know I alone can save France (which was then true, for he who had brought her to the brink of ruin could alone save her); but at bottom, it is against France and her glory their enmity is directed. England covets Belgium for the house of Orange; Prussia covets the Meuse for herself; Austria wishes to deprive us of Alsace and Lorraine, to barter them with Bavaria and the German princes. They want to destroy us, or at least to diminish our power, so as to reduce us to nothing. Well, my dear Caulaincourt, it is better to die than be minced up in that way. I am too old a soldier to fear death. They shall not say now that it is to satisfy my own ambition I fight, for it would be easy for me to save the throne; but I do not wish for a throne purchased by the humiliation of France. Look at these brave peasants, how they already rise and kill the Cossacks on every side! They give us an example. Let us follow it. Would you believe

that these contemptible members of the council of regency were willing to accept the infamous treaty proposed to you? Ah, I have ordered them to be silent and to be quiet. These poor peasants are far better than the Parisians. My dear Caulaincourt, you shall soon see glorious deeds. I am about to march to the fortresses, and within a few days collect 30,000 or 40,000 men. The enemy evidently pursues me. In no other way can we explain the appearance of the masses of cavalry that hover round us. My sudden appearance on Schwarzenberg's rear has made him fall back; and when he learns that I threaten his line of communication, he will not dare to advance on Paris. I shall soon have 100,000 men under my command; I shall pounce upon the nearest enemy, no matter whether Blucher or Schwarzenberg; I shall crush him, and the Burgundian peasantry will do the rest. The coalition, my dear Caulaincourt, is as near destruction as I am; and if I conquer, we shall tear these abominable treaties. If I miscalculate, then we shall die. We shall only do what our old companions in arms are doing every day, but we shall die after having saved our honour."

M. de Caulaincourt, who was as capable as anybody of comprehending this heroic language, remembered too many deliberate faults, too many ill-timed refusals, that honour had not counselled; his manner expressed discontent and cool disapprobation. Berthier, in whose presence this discourse occurred, was astounded. He, like Napoleon, was impressed by the encompassing presence of the enemy, and like the emperor, doubted that these troops could be merely a detachment; but, on the other hand, he asked himself how 200,000 allied troops, in whose favour victory had almost declared, could turn away from Paris, that great prey, that was almost within their grasp, to pursue a handful of men that had ventured to appear in their rear. He doubted, and under the circumstances doubt was agony; for, if the enemy were not in pursuit, they might within a few days reach Paris. This was the prevailing opinion. Restrained in presence of Napoleon, these opinions found vent elsewhere in unmeasured language. As to Napoleon himself, though his doubts were not allayed, he still repeated to M. de Caulaincourt—"You did well to return; I would have disowned you. You are come in time to witness great things."

All this energy, admirable, considered as a gift of God, but deplorable when we reflect that, ill employed, it had conducted us to the brink of an abyss—this energy was not infectious, and the entire army expected every moment a terrible *dénouement*. This *dénouement* was indeed approaching; the fatal hour had at length arrived. Napoleon's military combinations were certainly profound; but if the efforts of genius could readjust his military affairs, no power of genius could retrieve his political position.

Paris, filled with terror, and disgusted with his régime, a régime glorious but sanguinary, methodical but despotic; Paris, at the first appearance of enemies who declared themselves liberators, might be lost to Napoleon, and become the theatre of a revolution! Should the allies only suspect this sad truth, it would suffice to make them neglect all prudential considerations, and think of making this the scene, not of a military, but a political operation; and then Napoleon's plans would be frustrated, and his throne, which his powerful hand had two or three times within the last month sustained under terrible shocks, would crumble into dust. We shall now see how near the allies were to guess the terrible truth that constituted all our weakness with regard to our invaders.

Prince Schwarzenberg had not very clearly understood the movement of the French army on Arcis; and it must be confessed that, to any one not in the secret, it would have presented some difficulty. His first and most natural supposition was, that Napoleon was going to give him battle, and the Austrian general determined to accept it at Arcis-sur-Aube, as Blucher had at Craonne and Laon. Expecting a sanguinary struggle of some days' continuance, he was far from thinking it finished on the evening of the 21st. Seeing Napoleon withdraw on the 22nd, he endeavoured to guess what could be his design, crossed the Aube in his rear, and took up a position between Ramerupt and Dampierre, behind a wide brook called Le Puits; his left was the Aube, his front covered by Le Puits, his right in the direction of Vitry. In this position he awaited fresh attacks on the part of his adversary, whom he feared was contemplating some extraordinary movement.

But Napoleon, as we have just seen, had no idea of attacking his foe, and was indeed meditating an extraordinary movement in advancing from the Aube to the Marne, in the direction of Metz. The next day—the 23rd—whilst Napoleon awaited at St. Dizier the rear of his army that were to join him by the Frignicourt ford, Prince Schwarzenberg's light cavalry, who followed on his track, perceived the movement of the French army, and saw clearly that they were taking the direction of Vitry. Of Napoleon's intentions there could now be no doubt, for it was evident he purposed to cut off the allies' lines of communication. What was to be done in this state of things? Would it be better to pursue Napoleon in the direction of Lorraine; or join Blucher, who could not be very distant, and with their combined troops, march on Paris, at the head of 200,000 men! The question was important, one of the most important that the heads of empires and commanders of armies were ever called on to resolve.

According to the strict rule of military tactics, the lines of

communication ought not to be abandoned; on the contrary, they ought to be guarded with a care proportionate to the daring and formidable character of the enemy. The lines of communication being threatened by Napoleon, Schwarzenberg ought to pursue him, conjointly with Blucher, and determine the military question before advancing to Paris to receive the prize of victory. There were undoubtedly some advantages to be gained by marching directly on Paris, especially that of abridging the struggle; still, should the allies be arrested before the gates of the capital by a resistance, not alone military, but popular, and should the allies be detained some days outside Paris, fighting at the outskirts of the barricaded suburbs, they might be attacked in the rear by Napoleon returning with an army of 100,000 men, and find themselves in a most perilous position.

These reasons were of great weight, and would have been decisive, had the situation been an ordinary one, and had the allies been likely to encounter before the walls of Paris a resistance such as the importance of the place and the patriotism and courage of the inhabitants might lead them to fear. But though they had received only one communication from Paris, that of which M. de Vitrolles was bearer, and though hitherto no manifestation had corroborated the truth of this communication, but that, on the contrary, the peasants were arming in the invaded provinces, they had discovered, by more than one symptom, that if M. de Vitrolles exaggerated in describing France as longing ardently for the Bourbons, he was perfectly right when he maintained that she was tired of war, of conscription, of imperial prefects, and that as soon as an opportunity of declaring her real sentiments offered, she would raise her voice against a government that, after having carried war to the very walls of the Kremlin, had now rolled back the destructive tide to the gates of Paris. There was a personage whose opinions commanded much more attention than those of M. de Vitrolles: this was Count Pozzo di Borgo, who had returned from London, and had acquired amongst the allies an influence proportionate to his talents, and who never wearied of repeating to them that they ought to march on Paris. "The great object of the war," he said, "is the possession of Paris. As long as you think of fighting battles, you run the chance of being beaten, because Napoleon will always fight better than you, and his army, even though discontented, but sustained by a sentiment of honour, will fight beside him to the last man. All ruined as is his military power, it is still great, very great, and aided by his genius, greater than yours. But his political power is at an end. The times have changed. A military despotism, hailed as a blessing at the close of the Revolution, has been tested by its results, and is now universally condemned. If you give

scope for a manifestation, it will be prompt, general, irresistible, and Napoleon being at a distance, the Bourbons, whom France has forgotten, and in whose talents she has no confidence, will become suddenly popular, and from popular, necessary. It is by a political, not a military movement, that you ought to try and finish the war, and to achieve that as soon as an opening of any kind occurs between the belligerent armies through which you can pass, hasten to take advantage of it; if you can lay a finger on Paris, even a single finger, the colossus is overthrown. You will have broken the sword you cannot wrest from him."

Such was the substance of the speeches unceasingly addressed by Count Pozzo to the Emperor Alexander, and he certainly had to do with a very impressionable person. Besides the very remarkable intelligence of Alexander, Count Pozzo had enlisted in his favour all the passions of this prince. To be revenged, not for the burning of Moscow, of which he had ceased to think, but for the personal humiliations that Napoleon had inflicted on him; to enter Paris, enter the capital of the civilised world, and there dethrone a despot, and stretch forth a succouring hand to the French people; to receive for these deeds universal applause—this was the intoxicating dream in which he indulged. This dream so occupied his mind that to realise it he was capable of acts of daring, alike foreign to his head and heart.

As to the rest, Count Pozzo di Borgo's opinions had gradually taken possession of the public mind. Owing their origin to the Prussians, amongst whom they had been engendered by hate, they afterwards found acceptance amongst the Russians, and finally amongst the Austrians. The latter very clearly understood that to strike Napoleon politically was the surest and promptest manner of destroying him. The Emperor Francis and M. de Metternich, though regretting in him, not a son-in-law, but a ruler more capable than any other of governing France, had felt, since the dissolution of the congress at Chatillon, that Austria should take a decisive part against Napoleon personally. They had long shrunk from the necessity of pushing things to an extremity; but having crossed the Rhine, and admitted the principle of the limits of 1790, which rendered the ancient Low Countries monarchless, and for which Austria was to have Italy in exchange; knowing Napoleon too well to believe that he would ever submit to such a reduction of his territories, they had, through ambition, reached the same conclusion to which the Prussians had been led by hatred, and the Russians by vanity. To seek at Paris the political solution of the question which involved at the same time the military solution, seemed to them now a necessity. Prince Schwarzenberg, timid but steady, had adopted the same opinions as M. de

Metternich and the Emperor Francis, for at this moment Austria presented the extraordinary phenomenon of an emperor, a prime minister, and a generalissimo identical in their sentiments, constituting, as it were, but one man, insensible alike to love and hate, and influenced solely by deep-laid calculations. Under these circumstances Prince Schwarzenberg, seeing the road to Paris open, was inclined for the first time to advance, so that the resolution of marching on the capital was almost unanimously adopted, though several experienced officers opposed this rash proceeding as contrary to the rules of war, which teach that the lines of communication should never be abandoned, nor victory risked by a too great eagerness to attain it. An event calculated to strengthen the opinion of the more daring occurred during the day. Wintzingerode's cavalry, forming Blucher's vanguard, had fallen in, near the Marne, with the cavalry of Count Pahlen, belonging to Prince Schwarzenberg. There were mutual congratulations and rejoicings at this junction, which, to say the truth, ought to have taken place sooner, for the battle of Laon, having been fought on the 9th and 10th March, it was strange that Blucher had not pursued Napoleon or the marshals who had replaced him on the Aisne, and that on the 23rd he was still groping between the Aisne and the Marne. But Blucher had acted like generals who possess more obstinacy of temper than firmness of mind. He had first tried to take Reims, then Soissons—had long waited the arrival of some thousands of Bulow's corps that had remained *en arrière*, and had finally decided to drive the Marshals Mortier and Marmont before him, and had reached the Marne by Chalons. However this may be, he brought with him one hundred thousand men, and the allies had now two hundred thousand ready to march on Paris. The presence of such a force easily removed objections founded on the rules of war, however skilfully propounded.

Whilst things were in this state, Prince Schwarzenberg was passing the night with the Emperor Alexander at the Chateau de Dampierre, when suddenly despatches were brought that had been taken from a Paris courier arrested by the allied light infantry. Prince Wolkonski, the head of Alexander's staff, was at the chateau, as well as Count Nesselrode, the head of his *chancellerie*. The latter was called, who, having long resided at Paris, might be better able to seize the meaning of the intercepted despatches, which were submitted to his perusal. These were extremely important. They consisted of letters from the empress and the Duke de Rovigo to the emperor. Both expressed intense alarm about the internal state of Paris. Those of the empress, breathing a sort of terror, were not, of course, of great significance, for they might

be only an expression of feminine weakness. But the letters of the Duke de Rovigo would be estimated differently; for, minister of police and a soldier, long accustomed to difficulties, he could not be suspected of timidity; and he declared that Paris contained within its walls influential accomplices of the foreigners, and that at the appearance of an allied army it was probable they would follow the example of the Bordelais. This revelation was, at such a moment, of immense importance; it threw new light on the political position of affairs, and put an end to any remaining doubts as to the course to be pursued. After this involuntary avowal on the part of the emperor's government, of his wife, and his minister of police, there could no longer be a doubt that the imperial throne was tottering to its fall, and that to march on Paris was the most certain means of hastening its destruction. The Emperor Alexander and Prince Schwarzenberg were hastily awoke, and the intercepted despatches laid before them. These papers carried instant conviction to the minds of both. To march directly on Paris seemed the most suitable determination, one that ought to be put into execution at daybreak. The three sovereigns were not on the spot. Alexander, the most active of the three, wishing to be everywhere, and particularly with the generals, was at the actual time with Prince Schwarzenberg. The most modest, the wisest, he who made least commotion, and who, not being a soldier, did not wish to embarrass the military chiefs by his presence, the Emperor Francis, had taken up his abode at Bar-sur-Aube, a considerable distance from head-quarters. The King of Prussia, who was a kind of medium between the two emperors, being more reserved than the one, more active than the other, was staying in the neighbourhood. It was agreed that he should be immediately sought, and that in the morning the army should march towards the Marne, where Blucher was; that all the allied forces being combined, a consultation should be held, whose result the presence of the Prussians rendered certain; and that the army should take the route to Paris. Prince Schwarzenberg undertook to acquaint his master with the plan that had been adopted; and to beg of him by letter not to think of joining the invading army, lest he might, in the inter-crossings of the belligerent armies, fall into the hands of his son-in-law, which would be a serious complication in the actual state of things. There was a line of communication through Burgundy that might be called Austrian, as reinforcements had been sent to Count de Bubna from Troyes to Dijon. Prince Schwarzenberg advised the Emperor Francis and M. de Metternich to go to Dijon; for, independent of the inconvenience of being made prisoner, it would not be suitable that the Emperor Francis should be

present at the dethronement of his son-in-law, and especially of his daughter. These arrangements being made, they left Dampierre for Sommepins on the morning of the 24th.

The journey was not long, the distance being scarcely three leagues. The Emperor Alexander, Prince Schwarzenberg, Wolkonski, the head of the staff, and Count Nesselrode left the Chateau of Dampierre together, and met at Sommepins the King of Prussia, Blucher, and his staff. It is asserted that the fatal resolution that was to lead the armies of Europe within the walls of Paris was taken on a little mound in the neighbourhood of Sommepins, and that there the consultation was held, whose result was already certain, since to all the sentiments that had obtained in the Chateau of Dampierre the Prussian passions were now added. The council was almost unanimous. Replies swarmed in answer to the objections founded on military principles, which were the offspring of a servile subservience to the rules of war. Napoleon was about to cut off the allies' lines of communication; but they were also about to cut off his. The mischief he would do in seizing their magazines, their hospitals, their rearguards, their convoys of matériel, would be doubly, trebly repaid by capturing what they should find on the Nancy route, between Paris and the French army. He would take much; they would take more. And afterwards, whither would both parties go? Napoleon would go to Metz and Strasburg, where his presence would decide nothing; the allies would go to Paris, where they were certain of effecting a revolution, and snatching from Napoleon the power that rendered him so formidable. To pursue him would be to carry out his own views—for that was evidently what he desired in executing this extraordinary and unexpected movement towards Lorraine. But it would be turning from the main object, and exposing themselves to a series of military chances; for Napoleon would be reinforced by the junction of his garrisons, and the allies would recommence with exhausted armies against recently recruited forces the formidable game of battles, at which, undoubtedly, Napoleon was the stronger; the war would be lengthened out, interminable complications would arise, and very probably the allies would end by falling into some snare that Napoleon would have the art to spread, and which they would not have the skill to avoid, and in which they would be finally ruined. To go to Paris and strike Napoleon a vital blow was the shortest and surest way, though it appeared the most dangerous; and in any case, supposing they could not enter the capital of France, there was a line of retreat secured—that from Paris to Lille, the Belgic route—where the allies would meet Bernadotte with 100,000 Dutch, English, Hanoverians, and Swedes.

There was no weighty argument to oppose to this mode of reasoning. Everybody yielded, and this frustrated Napoleon's calculations, by regarding only political considerations, whilst he, despising politics, to whose suggestions he seldom lent an ear, founded all his proceedings on military considerations. As usual, having reasoned on military premises, he was politically wrong, and thus continually deceiving himself, his destruction became inevitable.

It was immediately resolved that all the allied *corps d'armée* should pause on the spot where they were, and on the following morning march for Paris. But some troops should be left in Napoleon's rear, either to harass or watch him, and obtain intelligence of his movements, in case that, changing his resolve, he should return on Paris. General Wintzingerode was ordered to keep close in his rear, with ten thousand horse, some thousand light infantry, and a large number of artillery. These troops would be sufficient to cause him now and then some annoyance, but would be especially useful in gaining intelligence of his resolves as soon as they were formed. The allies, in advancing on Paris, were desirous of having an emissary who would precede them, and enter into relations with MM. de Talleyrand and de Dalberg, whom they regarded as the principal instruments of the revolution they contemplated. There was an emissary ready to their wishes—M. de Vitrolles—sent by the malcontent chiefs, and sending him back would only be replying to the overture they had made. But M. de Vitrolles was no longer to be had. Faithful, it must be confessed, to the promises made at Chatillon, the allied sovereigns had not wished to give M. de Vitrolles a hearing before the dissolution of the congress. Considering themselves free after that event, they had consented to receive and hear him, and expressed a wish to send him to Paris. But he, anxious to see the Bourbons, whom he loved, and who were about to become masters of France, preferred going to Lorraine, where, it was believed, the Count d'Artois had already arrived, than to return to Paris and run the risk of falling into the hands of the Duke de Rovigo. He persevered in requesting permission to seek the Count d'Artois. There were certainly many important arrangements to be made with this prince, for it was imperative that the very day on which the allies entered this formidable Paris—formidable whether they appeared as conquerors or as liberators—it was imperative, we say, that a government should be ready organised, under whose rule the French might immediately place themselves; and though the allies felt no decided preference for the Bourbons, yet the return of these princes resulted so spontaneously from the nature of things, that it would be necessary to act in concert with them. The allied

sovereigns therefore consented to the departure of M. de Vitrolles for Lorraine, and it was arranged that after having seen the Count d'Artois, he should return to headquarters, outside the walls of Paris. He was commissioned to tell the Count d'Artois, that in returning to France, he should lay aside many prejudices, forget many persons and circumstances, and be directed by the advice of MM. de Dalberg, de Talleyrand, and such persons.

M. de Vitrolles having left before the events at Arcis-sur-Aube occurred, the allies, on marching on Paris, had no means prepared of communicating with those inside the walls; but the gates of this capital once opened by the instrumentality of cannon, it was presumed that political relations might be easily established. The next day, the 25th March, a day of mournful memory, the allied forces, henceforth combined, set out, Blucher's army on the right, Schwarzenberg's on the left, both advancing on Fère-Champenoise, the Paris route between the Marne and the Seine.

Advancing in this direction, the allies could not fail to meet several corps, unfortunately scattered, who, in obedience to orders and their own inclinations, were en route to join Napoleon. Amongst these corps the principal were those of Mortier and Marmont, that had been left as an army of observation in advance of Blucher, and the great convoy of reinforcement and matériel sent to Sézanne, to be put under General Pacthod's escort. We shall now relate what had befallen each up to the 25th March.

Napoleon, in quitting Reims, had left Mortier there to support Marmont, who was defending the bridge of the Aisne at Berry-au-Bac, whilst General Charpentier, with some débris, defended at Soissons the second bridge of the Aisne. When Blucher, having lost six or seven days in vain deliberations at Laon, determined to march to the Aisne, he found the bridge of Berry-au-Bac too well guarded to be carried by a direct attack. He sent a strong detachment some leagues higher up, to Neuchâtel, where the passage was easy, whilst he made a feint of passing lower down, at Pontavert. As soon as the detachment that had crossed the Aisne at Neuchâtel reached the high grounds at Berry-au-Bac, Blucher advanced on the 18th to attack the bridge. But Marshal Marmont had mined it, and it was blown up with a terrible explosion before the eyes of the Prussians. Marmont then retired through Roucy on Fismes. This was an error and the source of great misfortunes.

The most natural movement for Marshal Marmont would have been to fall back on his reserve, that is to say, on Marshal Mortier, who was at Reims. It is true that Napoleon had

given instructions both to cover Paris and to keep up a communication with him. But if Fismes was on the route to Paris, so was Reims, and by repairing there, Marmont had the advantage of concentrating his forces and coming in direct communication with Napoleon. It would therefore have been better to go to Reims than to Fismes, for in marching towards Fismes there was an almost evident risk of being cut off from Napoleon, which was contrary to half his orders, and might induce, as we shall see, fatal consequences.

Marshal Marmont, probably influenced by the sight of the enemy's corps that had passed the Aisne at Neuchâtel, and who were advancing against his right, instinctively drew off to the left, and it was in consequence of this merely mechanical movement that he fell back on Fismes. Having arrived at this place, he felt himself isolated, and summoned Marshal Mortier to his aid. The latter, modest and wholly free from jealousy, knowing that Marmont had more talent than himself, and forgetting that he had not as much good sense, thought it his duty to defer to his colleague's opinion, and left Reims on the 19th; he joined Marmont at Fismes, which proves that the two marshals might in the first instance have repaired to Reims without being on that account cut off from the Paris route. Their combined forces amounted to about 15,000 men.

They remained in position, on a hillock called St. Martin, until the evening of the next day, the 20th; this proves that the enemy was not very troublesome, and it also proves how easy it would have been, during these first days, to manœuvre as they pleased between Paris and Napoleon. On the evening of the 20th, despatches arrived from Napoleon, written at Plancy, at the moment when he was leaving for Arcis. These despatches condemned the movement on Fismes, as separating the marshals from him, and ordered them to rejoin him by the route supposed to be the shortest and safest. To return to Reims was no longer possible, for the enemy had taken advantage of our retreat to occupy the place. From Fismes to Epernay, which would have been the most direct route to join Napoleon, there were no roads practicable for artillery. It would therefore have been necessary to come down to Chateau-Thierry and cross the Marne there, then reascend between the Marne and the Seine by the Montmirail route, thus losing two days and exposing themselves to vexatious encounters. As there was no choice, the marshals set out on the evening of the 20th, and arrived on the 21st at Chateau-Thierry; they recrossed the Marne there, and the next day, the 22nd, advanced on Champaubert by two different routes, in order not to embarrass each other by following the same road. They arrived at their destination in the evening. On

the 23rd they went to Bergères, whence they began to get a glimpse of the enemy, and were obliged to proceed very cautiously. They learned that Napoleon had had a bloody affair at Arcis, that he had recrossed the Aube, and returned to the Marne in the neighbourhood of Vitry. To proceed in this direction, and endeavour to reach the emperor, was the duty of the marshals, however great the risk. They consequently resolved to advance as far as Soudé-Sainte-Croix, half-a-day's march from Vitry. If they found an opening through the columns of the allied army, they intended to dash through blindly, in order to join Napoleon. If they did not succeed, and if the adverse army remained interposed in a compact mass between them and Napoleon, their intention was to follow their movements cautiously, and fall back and cover Paris, should the allies advance on the capital. In fact, this was the only plan of conduct left them to follow, after committing the error of retiring to Fismes instead of Reims.

The next day, the 24th March, the two marshals repaired to Soudé-Sainte-Croix, but Marshal Mortier, wishing to know what was going on at Chalons, conceived the idea of crossing by Vatry, which would necessarily prolong his route. Marmont arrived in the evening at Soudé-Sainte-Croix, and finding that he alone had kept the appointment, felt very uneasy. A vast line of fires gradually sprang up before him, until the horizon glowed in the reflected blaze. Marmont selected three of his officers, who spoke German and Polish, and sent them to reconnoitre. One of these, a Pole, a brave and intelligent man, penetrated into the enemy's bivouacs, and learned all he wished to know; he soon returned to make his report to Marshal Marmont. According to this report, all the allied armies lay before them, amounting to nearly 200,000 men, and they were separated by this enormous mass from Napoleon, who had set out for St. Dizier. It would be scarcely possible to reach the imperial army, opposed by such obstacles. Marmont sent an officer to Mortier, begging him to come up as quickly as possible, and recommending him to take a position in the rear, as a protection against the dangerous neighbours whose vicinity they had just discovered.

The following day, the 25th March, Mortier had an interview with Marmont. He had lost time in crossing by Vatry, and had received on the way the same intelligence that his colleague had learned. In consequence of this information, both thought it advisable to fall back on Fère-Champenoise; besides, the enemy's columns advancing towards them, rendered this movement unavoidable. Marmont prepared to retire to Sommesous, earnestly entreating his colleague to take the same direction.

Such had been the operations of the Marshals Marmont and Mortier up to the morning of the 25th March, the very hour that the allied armies commenced their march on Paris. Two other corps, those of General Pacthod and General Compans, soon after found themselves in a position similar to that of the two marshals. General Pacthod had been left at Sézanne, with his division of the national guards, to escort the reinforcements destined for the army. He had been successively joined by different battalions, some of the line, others of the young guard, who had come from Paris under General Compans, and an immense quantity of artillery, the whole amounting to about 10,000 men. Napoleon had reckoned on these reinforcements, and had several times recommended them to the especial care of the war minister; the minister bestowed little attention on them, and these battalions wandered about at random, awaiting instructions that never arrived. General Pacthod having learned by different reconnaissances that he was near Marmont and Mortier, wrote to the latter, who did not know what advice to give, and Pacthod, receiving no answer, advanced from Sézanne to Fère-Champenoise, in the direction from the Aube to the Marne, by which movement he would cross the route of the two marshals, and could easily join them. On the very morning of the 25th, he crossed their line of march, and found himself near a place called Villeseneux. General Compans followed General Pacthod at a great distance.

This was the position of the different French corps when on the morning of the 25th the allied army, abandoning to Wintzingerode the pursuit of Napoleon, took the road to Paris. Blucher advanced to the right, protected by the Marne; Schwarzenberg to the left, protected by the Aube. Nearly 20,000 horse preceded the two columns. The infantry followed within half-an-hour's march.

When Marshal Marmont saw the storm advancing in his direction, he immediately comprehended that the enemy had abandoned Napoleon, and were marching on Paris; he retraced his steps towards Sommesous, along the Fère-Champenoise route. The marshal—an excellent tactician—retreated in good order, sheltering his cavalry, that was not very numerous, behind his infantry squares. He paused at every tenable position, covering the advancing enemy with grape, and then resumed his march, still protecting his artillery and cavalry with his squares, whose solidity was not shaken for a moment.

At Sommesous a new vexation awaited him. Mortier, though hurrying, had not yet reached the rendezvous, and Marmont was obliged to wait his arrival, rather than run the risk of a separation. The combined forces of the two marshals would

amount at the utmost to 15,000 men. What would become of them if separated?

Marmont therefore waited resolutely the arrival of his colleague, but meanwhile he was exposed to many cavalry charges, and what was more vexatious, he was forced to lose most precious time, during which the enemy's columns had leisure to advance, and became more threatening. At length Mortier arrived, and the two marshals set out for Fère-Champenoise.

They had scarcely traversed some thousand metres when they were attacked by a terrific mass of cavalry supported by infantry. The two marshals sheltered themselves in a position that permitted them to resist some time. Two ravines, not very distant from each other, and running parallel, the one towards Vassimont, the other towards Connantray, left between them an open space of small extent, and easily defended. The marshals took up a position between the two ravines, fortifying the space that separated them; their left supported by the ravine of Vassimont, their right by that of Connantray; they thus covered the Fère-Champenoise route. They held their position as well as they could, confronted by the enemy's cavalry and artillery. The French cavalry, posted in the plain, defended themselves valiantly, but were at last driven back by Pahlen's horse, and obliged to take shelter behind our infantry.

During the proceedings the weather, which had been bad, became worse, and violent hail, beaten into the eyes of our artillerymen, obscured their vision; and now, the Russian horse, dashing on the Bordessoulle cuirassiers, who were on our left, a little in advance of Mortier, drove them back on our infantry. The young guard had hastily formed in squares; but their ammunition being rendered useless by the rain, they could not offer an effectual opposition to the enemy, and two of the squares of the Jamin brigade were broken. At the same moment an alarming spectacle presented itself to the eyes of our troops, who, spite of their youth, had hitherto unflinchingly maintained their ground. It was not that they were called on to dispute during an hour or two the space lying between the ravines of Vassimont and Connantray; they should afterwards fall back and defile through the village of Connantray that supported our right, and through which the Fère-Champenoise highroad passed. Whilst the main body of the enemy's cavalry charged us in front, a portion of their cavalry, having crossed the Connantray ravine on our right, came galloping on our rear, in the direction of Fère-Champenoise. Threatened in the rear, and exposed in front to reiterated attacks, our soldiers wheeled round a little too quickly, and retired on Fère-Champenoise in considerable confusion. Marmont's corps crossed Connantray with no greater loss than a few pieces of cannon; but Mortier

had some difficulty in extricating himself, and would have been overwhelmed had he not suddenly received unexpected aid.

Amongst the troops of the Generals Pacthod and Compans there were some cavalry regiments, hastily organised in the Versailles depôt. One of these regiments, having followed in General Pacthod's track, suddenly appeared between Vassimont and Connantray, charged the enemy's cavalry, disembarrassed our infantry, and saved Marshal Mortier's corps. The latter escaped, like Marmont, by the sacrifice of part of his artillery, that could not cross the Connantray ravine to reach Fère-Champenoise.

This skirmish, in which the bad weather, aiding an enemy ten times more numerous than we, had paralysed the resistance of our soldiers, cost us about three thousand men, and a considerable quantity of artillery. This was a severe loss, whether considered in itself, or relatively to the numerical weakness of the two marshals, and it was not the last they were destined to experience.

It was impossible to take up an abode at Fère-Champenoise; the marshals could only pass the night there. They were obliged to march towards Sézanne. But they were not sure of reaching the place, harassed as they were by hordes of enemies. Happily, in order to reach Sézanne, they skirted the heights over which passes the main road from Chalons to Montmirail, and where, a month before, the French troops had fought so gloriously. On the right was one of the little hillocks belonging to this range; it jutted into the plain, forming a kind of promontory. On this spot the marshals were preparing to take up a position for the night, and shelter themselves from the incessant attacks of the enemy's cavalry. But as they were marching to their destination a terrible cannonade was heard on their right and in their rear. The marshals became thoughtful, and Mortier remembered the brave and unfortunate Pacthod, who had asked him for advice that he was not able to give.

General Pacthod, in fact, endeavouring to join the marshals, had gone beyond Fère-Champenoise, and to overtake them, had advanced as far as Villeseneux. Having there learned their retrograde movement, he retraced his steps, pursued by Wassiltsikoff's cavalry, and directed his march towards Fère-Champenoise at the very moment Mortier left. General Pacthod abandoned the hope of reaching the place, and resolved to fall back towards Pierre-Morains and Bannes, expecting to find shelter near the St. Gond marshes. He marched with 3000 national guards, formed into five squares, and was forced to take refuge in a valley surrounded on every side by the enemy's troops. These troops did not at first recognise each other, for

some belonged to Blucher, others to Schwarzenberg, and they fired at each other. They soon perceived their error, and concentrated their fire on General Pacthod's unfortunate squares. The two last of these squares, that formed the rearguard from Villeseneux, had made a heroic resistance, though composed of national guards, the greater part of whom had never seen service. Surrounded on every side, exposed to showers of grape, they held their ground, until, beaten down by the artillery and their lines broken by the cavalry, they were cut down to the last man. The three remaining squares, driven towards the marsh of St. Gond, were at last forced into a single mass, and though still exposed to a heavy fire of grape, they refused to lay down their arms. Every fresh discharge of artillery produced frightful ravages amongst them.

The Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia, who had hastened to the spot, were touched by such heroism. Alexander sent one of his officers to summon them to surrender in his name, and those that remained surrendered to him. This prince could not help feeling some disquietude in seeing the simple national guards defend themselves with such energy; and he testified his astonishment and admiration of their conduct some days after. Noble and saddening episode of these wars, alike unwise and sanguinary!

This disastrous day of Fère-Champenoise, which the allies have decorated with the name of battle, and which was only the fortuitous encounter of 200,000 men with some straggling corps that fought in the proportion of one against ten, cost us about 6000 men in killed, wounded, and prisoners, without reckoning a great quantity of artillery. General Compans' corps, that had early taken the resolution of falling back, had marched on Coulommiers, and in perfect safety outstripped the enemy on the Meaux route.

The next day, the 26th March, the two marshals, whose united forces amounted to nearly 12,000 men, advanced on Ferté-Gaucher, in order to place themselves on the Marne between Lagny and Meaux, and defend Paris; for the Marne, falling into the Seine at Charenton, that is to say, above Paris, protects the capital against an enemy coming from the north-east. They traversed Sézanne at an early hour, meeting only some Cossacks, whom they dispersed, and continued their way through Mœurs and Esternay. Marshal Marmont formed the head, Marshal Mortier the rear of the column.

In the afternoon the advanced posts of our cavalry gave notice of the presence of the enemy at Ferté-Gaucher, which caused extreme surprise and a species of terror. General Compans having passed in this direction a few hours previously, and the enemy that pursued us being in the rear, it was difficult

to understand how an adverse force should appear in front. Still the thing was very simple, though it did not appear so. Blucher, in advancing on Chalons to join the army of Bohemia, had left Bulow before Soissons, and sent Kleist and d'York in pursuit of the two marshals. Kleist and d'York followed them to Chateau-Thierry, and from Chateau-Thierry had thrown themselves directly on Ferté-Gaucher, to cut them off from Paris.

Mortier and Marmont held a consultation on the spot, and it was agreed that the former should force a passage at Ferté-Gaucher, whilst the latter should hold the enraged pursuing enemy in check by defending Moutils *à outrance.* The Christiani division of the old guard vigorously attacked Ferté-Gaucher, but could not dislodge the enemy, who were strongly posted on the banks of the Grand-Morin. Marshal Marmont, on his side, defended himself valiantly in the defile of Moutils. The two marshals passed the day in this manner, their hearts oppressed with care, and not knowing how they should issue from this cut-throat trap, for they had the allied troops both in front and rear. Towards night, however, they conceived the design of turning to the left, and trying to reach Provins through Courtacon. The plan was executed successfully. Profiting of the darkness, they marched through the open country on the left, and reached Provins after frightful sufferings, but without experiencing any greater loss than that of some waggons. Happily the men and cannon were saved, and with the loss of a few carriages the marshals extricated themselves from this fearful difficulty. But the line of march was now changed, and there remained no other way of reaching Paris than by following the road along the right bank of the Seine from Melun to Charenton. The enemy were now at liberty to advance to the Marne, and cross it where they would, having no other obstacle to fear than General Compans' feeble division, that had retired to Meaux. It was therefore incumbent on the marshals to hasten, that they might arrive in time before the walls of Paris, and join General Compans, should he be so fortunate as to escape; in short, they wished to unite with the remaining patriotic citizens, and defend with them the capital of our country against Europe, that was thirsting for vengeance.

The marshals, fully comprehending there was no other line of conduct left them to follow, allowed their troops some rest, of which they stood much in need, for they had been marching three days and nights. They set out on the evening of the 27th for Paris, Marshal Marmont taking the Melun route, and Mortier that of Mormant, that they might not embarrass each other in pursuing the same road.

The next day, the 28th, they were equally far advanced on

their respective routes; the one slept at Melun, the other at Mormant. On the 29th they combined their forces and crossed the Marne at the point where it falls into the Seine, that is to say, at the bridge of Charenton. The two marshals went to receive the orders of Joseph and the regent for the defence of the capital.

General Compans, on his side, was joined en route by the retreating troops of General Vincent, that had occupied Chateau-Thierry, and those of General Charpentier, that had occupied Soissons, and who were falling back before the allied masses. With these he halted at Meaux, destroyed the bridges, sunk the fragments in the waves, and fell back, through Clay and Bondy, on Paris. The two armies of Bohemia and Silesia having arrived at the Marne, it was necessary to make arrangements for appearing before Paris. This great capital, renowned through the entire world, is situate below the confluence of the Marne with the Seine, and it is the largest and most populous part of Paris that lies exposed to an enemy coming from the north-east. In the times of which we speak, this quarter had no other protection than the heights of Romainville, of St. Chaumont, and of Montmartre. The allies would be obliged to cross the Marne en masse to force our last defences and avenge twenty years' humiliation. They crossed the river above and below Meaux, and distributed their forces in the following manner in advancing on Paris.

In the first place, the corps of Sacken and de Wrède were posted at Meaux, to cover the allies' rear against a sudden attack, and this precaution was very natural, for they had left Napoleon at St. Dizier. Blucher, with the corps of Kleist and d'York combined into one, with Woronzoff's corps (formerly Wintzingerode's), with Langeron's, the four comprising 90,000 men, was to move to the right, and take the Soissons route, in order to advance through Bourget on St. Denis and Montmartre. Bulow's corps had orders to seize Soissons. Prince Schwarzenberg, with Rajeffsky's corps (formerly Wittgenstein's) and the reserves, amounting in all to about 50,000 men, was to come by Meaux, Clay, and Bondy, on Pantin, La Villette, and the heights of Romainville. The Prince-Royal of Wurtemberg, with his own corps and that of Giulay, amounting to about 30,000 men, was to come through Chelles, Nogent-sur-Marne, and Vincennes, on Montreuil and Charonne. The three columns had orders to appear before the walls of Paris on the evening of the 29th, that they might be ready to commence an attack on the 30th. The allied armies were actually en marche to arrive on an appointed day before the walls of that great capital, the object of their long-cherished hatred and ambition.

It is unnecessary to say, for we can all divine, what were the

feelings of the Parisians. It was now beyond all doubt that the allied armies had resolved to march on Paris. Napoleon, whether through necessity, or as the result of a plan of operations that his people did not understand, was at this moment at a distance from his capital, and totally unable to protect it. With the exception of some men blinded by party feeling, the mass of the inhabitants was overwhelmed with grief, and would have hailed a deliverer, no matter whom. The desire to be delivered from Napoleon's government was as nothing compared to the fear of an assault, and the horrors that might ensue. The national guards, drawn exclusively from the middle classes, and reduced to 12,000 men, had not 3000 muskets; some were armed with pikes, which rendered them ridiculous. The people, though disliking the conscription and the *droits réunis*, shuddered at the appearance of foreigners, and would have willingly taken arms, if the government had any to give, and would place so much confidence in the citizens.

The populace wandered about idle, restless, discontented, in the faubourgs and on the boulevards. At the barriers crowds of peasants were seen driving their cattle before them, and bringing on carts whatever they could save of their humble furniture. The government had not thought of exempting these poor people from the entrance duty, and some of them were forced to sell, much below the value, a portion of what they brought, to purchase the right of sheltering the remainder within the walls of the capital. These unhappy creatures, as soon as they entered Paris, crowded the boulevards and public squares, and after having made a kind of encampment with their carts and cattle, ran about here and there, asking the news, retailing it, exaggerating it, and groaning at the roar of cannon, that proclaimed the ravage of their desolated farms. Over this people, so diversified, so confused, so distracted, hovered in a sort of distraction the strangest government in the world. The empress-regent, intensely alarmed for herself and her son, fearing at the same time the soldiers of her father, and the people over whom she had come to reign, no longer receiving from Cambacérès, who was stupefied, the advice she was accustomed to, wrongfully distrustful of Joseph, who was kind and affectionate to her, but whom she had been made to regard as jealous of the emperor, and consequently not knowing where to seek advice or support, she had been thrown by the sound of the cannon into a state of extreme alarm. Joseph was not frightened by the roar of the cannon, but beholding the thrones of his family falling one after another, he began to fear for that of France. It is true that, spurred on by the emperor, he for a moment busied himself with the organisation of the troops, without at all understanding the business; but he had neither

the knowledge, nor the activity, nor the authority necessary to utilise the elements of resistance still existing in Paris. The war minister, Clarke, Duke of Feltre, industrious, but void of capacity, weak-minded, and almost an infidel, opposing in every point the Duke of Rovigo, whom he detested, was scarcely fit to execute half the orders of the emperor, which referred almost exclusively to the active army. The Duke of Rovigo, intelligent and brave, but execrated as the instrument of a nearly extinct tyranny, had lost all influence. The other ministers, mere officials, did not step beyond the circle of their functions, and in the present circumstances participated in the general consternation. In short, M. de Talleyrand, the only man capable, not of creating resources, for he had never meddled in the administration, but of giving good advice as to the best mode of proceeding, smiled at the embarrassment of all these personages, sneered at them, and repaid with contempt their distrust of him. Such was the confused assemblage of princes and ministers who were at this moment charged with the safety of France. Now were seen on every side the deplorable consequences of a policy that provided only for foreign conquest: magnificent fortifications, arms, and soldiers at Dantzig, at Hamburg, at Flushing, at Palma-Nova, at Venice, at Alessandria; and at Paris—nothing—absolutely nothing! Not a redoubt, not a soldier, not a musket, not even a government, and the sole resource to direct the bravest people in the world was a weeping wife, and brothers, not without courage, but without authority, because the State had been concentrated in the person of one man; and because this man was absent, thought, will, and action seemed paralysed throughout France.

When on the 28th March the approaching arrival of the two marshals became known, and there being no longer any doubt as to the approach of the enemy, Joseph, who was the depository of Napoleon's instructions, both written and verbal, as to what was to be done with the empress and the King of Rome in case of an attack on Paris, communicated these instructions to the empress, to the Chancellor Cambacérès, and the minister Clarke; it never entered into the minds of either to disobey, though both Joseph and Cambacérès saw some strong objections against the prescribed measure. As to the empress, she was willing to leave or to remain, as her husband pleased. It was agreed that a council of regency should be immediately summoned, to discuss the question, and draw from the members a resolution conformable to Napoleon's intentions, positively and repeatedly expressed.

The council assembled on the evening of the 28th March, the empress presiding. It consisted of Joseph, of the great functionaries, Cambacérès, Lebrun, Talleyrand, the ministers

and presidents of the Senate, of the Legislative Corps, and the *Conseil d'Etat.*

No sooner was the council assembled at the Tuileries than, with the permission of the regent, the war minister addressed the assembly, and laid bare the situation of affairs in mournful and studied phrase. He said their sole remaining resources were the diminished corps of the Marshals Mortier and Marmont, some troops obtained with difficulty from the depôts, a national guard of 12,000 men, of whom a part only had muskets, a populace willing to fight, but unarmed, some palisades at the gates of the city, but no defensive works on the heights; in a word, 25,000 men, wholly unaided by art, and called on to oppose 200,000 veteran soldiers furnished with all the matériel of war. The minister accompanied this exposé with expressions of the most profound devotedness to the imperial family, and concluded by recommending the immediate departure of the empress and the King of Rome for the Loire, where they would be beyond the reach of the enemy.

M. Boulay (de la Meurthe), who had listened impatiently to the war minister, protested impetuously against such a proposition, and expatiated warmly on the self-evident disadvantages of such a project. He said it would be at the same time abandoning the capital and reducing the Parisians to despair, who looked on the daughter and grandson of the Emperor of Austria as a kind of Ægis; but should these seem only to consult their own safety, it would be inviting every one else to follow the example; that from that moment the defence of Paris would become impossible, that it would be tantamount to opening the gates to the enemy, and the departure of the government would create a void which a hostile party, supported by foreigners, would quickly fill by proclaiming the Bourbons, as had happened at Bordeaux. M. Boulay (de la Meurthe), after having stated his opinions, proposed that Marie Louise should imitate the example of her illustrious grandmother, Marie Therese, that she should go to the Hôtel de Ville, with her son in her arms, and there make an appeal to the people of Paris, who, at need, could raise 100,000 soldiers to defend her.

This advice, to which there could be no objection had there been 100,000 muskets to give the Parisians, and the government willing to trust them, was approved by the majority, especially by the minister of police, the Duke de Rovigo, and by the old Duke de Massa, who, notwithstanding his age and the impaired state of his health, opposed the departure of the empress with an eloquence that savoured of the vigour of youth. Even the sage and cool-tempered Duke de Cadore grew warm as he supported the proposition of staying at Paris and making a vigorous defence. Amid this general expression of opinion,

that almost amounted to unanimity, Joseph, though appearing to side with those that opposed the proposition of leaving Paris, remained silent, and seemed as if paralysed by an invisible power. Prince Cambacérès, bowed beneath the weight of his vexations, was also silent. The empress, powerfully agitated, was silent, but her supplicating looks implored advice from all present.

M. de Talleyrand, with the authority inseparable from his name, spoke in turn, and expressed an opinion truly surprising to those who were aware of his secret relations. With that calm, graceful, and at the same time disdainful gravity that characterised his manner of speaking, he gave the soundest political advice, such, in fact, as he might have enunciated had he been exclusively devoted to the Bonapartes. He laid little stress on the enthusiasm that might be awakened by conducting the empress and the King of Rome to the Hôtel de Ville, he was too discriminating to put much faith in such resources, but he laid great stress on the danger of evacuating Paris. To evacuate the capital was, in his opinion, to abandon it to the attempts that an adverse party would not fail to make at the first appearance of the allied armies. This adverse party, as every one knew, was that of the Bourbons. The allies, their great support, were drawing near. To abandon Paris, and remove Marie Louise from the capital, would be to free the allies from every difficulty they might encounter in effecting a revolution. Such was the general sense, though not the exact words, of the opinion expressed by M. de Talleyrand; and it was strange to hear a man who was to be the principal actor in the approaching revolution describe it so minutely beforehand.

People devoid of finesse, and who for that very reason suspect its existence in others, believed at this moment, and gave utterance to their opinion, that M. de Talleyrand had put forth this opinion in order that another might be adopted. This was a puerile error. M. de Talleyrand, called upon unexpectedly, had obeyed the dictates of his good sense, and gave the best possible advice. Moreover, the proposal of leaving annoyed him. To remain at Paris after advising a departure would put him in a serious difficulty; to leave would be to run the risk of all the vicissitudes that might befall the departing government, and remove to a distance from that which was approaching. In short, the advice to remain had an appearance of devotedness that might be useful, if Napoleon—whom the French would never believe utterly vanquished until they heard of his death—should ultimately triumph. Having thus spoken conformably to the dictates of his understanding, and suitably to his particular circumstances, M. de Talleyrand was silent, and not a person present had the courage to offer an opinion after his. The question was put to the vote, and a considerable

majority appeared in favour of those who disapproved the departure of the empress and the King of Rome.

The result was scarcely announced when extraordinary anxiety was discoverable in the countenance of the minister Clarke, and not less in the face of Prince Joseph, who, however, had visibly encouraged the opinion in favour of which the majority had decided. Then, as if under the influence of an imperative necessity, the war minister rose, and pronounced a lengthy discourse, again recommending the departure of the empress and the King of Rome. In support of his opinion he adduced reasons which, without being good, were the least bad that could be alleged. Paris was not everything, and ought not to be; and Paris once taken, it would be necessary to defend *à outrance* the rest of France, and dispute it obstinately with the enemy. It would be better to repair, with the empress and the King of Rome, to the provinces that had not yet been invaded, rally every patriotic Frenchman, and defend to the last man their native land and the emperor's throne. But this prolonged struggle was not possible if, leaving the empress and her son in the capital, they exposed them to the risk of falling into the hands of the allied sovereigns. This would be yielding up to the Emperor of Austria the precious pledge of his which they held; and if the people in any of the provinces were willing to raise the standard of resistance, they could not find any high personage round whom the devoted subjects of the empire could rally. Besides, the probability of seeing the enemy enter Paris was greater than was generally believed; for there was very little chance, with the resources they had, of resisting the 200,000 men that were marching on the capital.

The war minister had taken all this trouble through a simple spirit of obedience. At bottom, he had no opinion on any subject. The arguments he brought forward he had drawn from historic recollections of cases of desperate resistance. These arguments, which were valid at Vienna under Marie Therese, at Berlin under the great Frederick, but false at Paris in the case of a vanquished soldier, did not convince any one; for, without avowing it mentally, and without daring to express it openly, every one felt that with a government, itself the offspring of revolution, and that had ceased to be popular, and for which a substitute was ready prepared, to abandon the capital was to open the way for a revolution. Every one retained his opinion; and the sense of the assembly being again taken, it was found that the members were almost unanimous in declaring that Marie Louise and the King of Rome ought to remain at Paris.

Then Joseph broke his prolonged silence, and the motive of his hitherto inexplicable conduct was revealed. He read two

letters of the emperor's — one dated from Troyes, after the battle of La Rothière, the other from Reims, after the battles of Craonne and Laon—in which Napoleon declared that on no account should his wife and son be allowed to fall into the hands of the allies. We have already explained the feelings under which Napoleon wrote these two letters. Independent of the very sincere affection he bore his wife and son, he wished to keep in his hands a precious pledge; he also feared that Marie Louise might become the docile instrument of all that his enemies would contrive against him, especially by creating a regency that would exclude him from the throne. After the disquieting battle of La Rothière, this was his opinion, and he still held the same after the doubtful battles of Craonne and Laon. The two letters of the emperor now produced were an overwhelming blow to the council of regency. Under the impulse of the moment, those whose opinions were negatived by the letters of the emperor, exclaimed that it was very wrong to assemble a council when an order had been received from Napoleon, an absolute order, that did not admit of discussion. But reflection succeeding to the first emotion, they examined the letters, and disputed the use that was being made of them. The first had been written under circumstances very different from the present, after the battle of La Rothière, when there appeared to be no chance of resisting the enemy. But since then glorious triumphs, mingled, it is true, with less agreeable events, had prolonged the war and rendered the result uncertain. The circumstances were therefore different, and Napoleon would not probably at the actual time give the same orders.

To this interpretation the second letter replied peremptorily. This letter was written at Reims the 16th March, the morrow of the successful battle of Reims, at the very time the emperor was commencing his march towards the fortresses. The members were obliged to yield, and consent that the empress should depart next day, the 29th. It was, however, resolved that Joseph and the ministers should remain, in order to direct the defence of Paris, and not leave until it would be no longer possible to dispute this city with the enemy. The Chancellor Cambacérès, little suited to the tumult of arms, and being besides an adviser indispensable to the empress, was to accompany her. The council broke up, and the members went their way confounded, and in a state of agitation unusual under this government, hitherto so obedient and peaceful. They broke out into recriminations, each imputing to the other the approaching ruin of the empire. Some of the more zealous members reproached the Duke of Rovigo with not having had recourse to the means that had saved France in '92—for example, with not having raised the people—to which he replied

that he agreed with them; but in order to raise the people he would have needed two things which he did not possess—in the first place, arms, and in the next, permission to have recourse to such means. In descending the staircase of the Tuileries, M. de Talleyrand, who walked in the same fashion as he wrote, that is to say, slowly, said to the Duke of Rovigo, leaning on the cane on which he habitually supported himself —"Well, what an end to so glorious a reign! To finish his career like an adventurer, instead of terminating it peacefully on the greatest throne in the world, after having stamped the century with his name—what an end! The emperor would be much to be pitied, had he not deserved his fate by surrounding himself with such stupids!" The Duke of Rovigo, who had felt his own influence declining, and set no great value on those who had replaced him in the confidence of the emperor, bowed his head and made no reply; he even appeared to approve the observations of M. de Talleyrand. The latter, with a look that solicited a little more confidence, added—"However, it will not suit every one to allow himself to be crushed under these ruins, and we ought to look to it." But finding the Duke of Rovigo still silent, for, though discontented, he was faithful, M. de Talleyrand finished the conversation with these simple words—"We shall see." He then stepped into his carriage, apprehensive that he had said too much.

After this meeting, whose consequences were so serious, Joseph, the Prince Cambacérès, and Clarke, in accompanying the empress to her apartments, communicated to each other their opinions, and acknowledged that the resolution to obey Napoleon presented serious difficulties. "But tell me," said Marie Louise, "what I ought to do, and I will do it. You are very true counsellors, and you must teach me how to interpret the wishes of my husband." Prince Cambacérès, whose wisdom was now of little avail, and Joseph, who feared incurring any responsibility, dared not advise disobedience to the orders of Napoleon. However, they decided that before obeying, they would ascertain whether the danger was really so great as was believed, and whether the time was come for putting into execution orders considered so dangerous. It was therefore resolved that Joseph and Clarke should the next morning make a military reconnaissance round Paris, and the empress was not to leave until they should have pronounced a final opinion.

The next day, the 29th, the Place du Carrousal was filled with carriages belonging to the court. These were loaded, besides the baggage of the imperial family, with Napoleon's most valuable papers, the remains of his private treasure, that amounted to about eighteen millions, the greater part in gold, and lastly, the crown diamonds. A restless and discontented

crowd had assembled, for Marie Louise had appeared to many a protection against the barbarity of foreigners. "These foreigners," said the multitude, "will not pillage, they will not burn, they will not destroy with bombs, the city that contains the daughter and grandson of the Emperor of Austria." The departure of Marie Louise seemed a desertion, a kind of treason. Still the crowd remained inactive and mute. Some officers of the national guard having succeeded in entering the palace—for in public calamities, etiquette yields to strong emotion—endeavoured to persuade Marie Louise to remain, saying they were ready to defend her and her son to the last extremity. She replied, in tears, that she was only a woman, that she had no authority, that she was obliged to obey the emperor; she thanked them for their offers of service, which she was neither able to refuse or accept. The unhappy woman (she was at that time really attached to the cause of her son and her husband) walked up and down through her apartments, weeping, expecting Joseph, who did not come, and not knowing what to say or what to do. At length, repeated messages having come from Clarke, announcing that the enemy's light cavalry already inundated the environs of the capital, she set off about midnight, overwhelmed with grief, bringing her son, who stamped with anger, demanding whither he was being carried. Whither he was being carried, unhappy child! To Vienna, where he was destined to die, without father, almost without mother, without country, and kept in ignorance of his glorious origin. Unhappy child, offspring of that strange destiny that united a soldier to the daughter of the Cæsars, and whose fate, next to the woes of France, is the most mournful history recorded in the annals of these extraordinary times.

The cortège of this terrified court—sad example of human vicissitudes, calculated to scare the happy ones of the world—advanced slowly towards Rambouillet, amid a discontented but silent crowd, who foresaw at this moment the future as if it lay unveiled before them. Twelve hundred soldiers of the old guard escorted the fugitive court. This dreadful day of the 29th, the eve of one still more terrible, was devoted to making defensive preparations. Joseph had employed the morning, in company with several officers, in making a reconnaissance in the environs of Paris, which had delayed his replies to the empress, and the result of his observations was, that with the actual disposable means the capital could not be defended twenty-four hours. It is certain that with the forces brought by the two marshals, with the depôts then at Paris, there were scarcely more than 22,000 or 23,000 men to oppose nearly 200,000. The national guard amounted to 12,000, whom a sense of duty and detestation of foreigners would have

converted into devoted soldiers; but there were not more than 3000 or 4000 who had muskets. Amongst the populace sinewy limbs could be found, and in the common danger they would not be wanting in good-will; but there were no weapons to give them. As to the defensive works, we have already said they consisted of some ill-armed redoubts, and some *tambours* before the gates, constructed *en palissades*, and without moats. Napoleon, however, had sent orders, unhappily in general terms, such as it was possible to send from a distance, and amid the multiplied movements of an active army. Besides, as the question was of an irregular resistance, maintained by any means within reach, nothing could be foreseen, nor orders given beforehand. Napoleon's own presence was needed, with his strong will, his activity, his inventive genius, his indomitable energy, to turn to advantage the resources that Paris possessed; the excellent but irresolute Joseph, the incompetent and vacillating Duke de Feltre, were ill fitted to supply his place in such circumstances. They were only impressed by the fact that they had 20,000 or 25,000 regular troops, and that the enemy had 200,000. Certainly, the idea of a battle under such circumstances could only inspire despair; but nothing could be more stupid than the idea of giving battle outside the walls of Paris, for, the battle lost, and it was impossible it could be otherwise, everything was lost—the battle, Paris, the government, and France. Paris ought to be defended as General Bourmont had a few days before defended Nogent, as General Alix had defended Sens, as the Spaniards had defended their cities, as the Parisians themselves had too often defended Paris against their governments, with barricaded suburbs, with the populace drawn up behind the barricades, only reserving the regular army to fall on the points where the enemy might penetrate. For a resistance of this kind, there was no want of resources. The army, with the additions that might be made to the corps of the Marshals Marmont and Mortier, would amount to 24,000 or 25,000 men. There were 12,000 national guards, to whom 5000 or 6000 muskets might be given, a number generally disposable out of the 30,000 or 40,000 under repair, and which Clarke persevered in keeping for the active troops, which would have raised to 8000 or 9000 the number of the national guards regularly armed. The Parisians could at that time have furnished 50,000 or 60,000 volunteers, who could have found fowling-pieces, of which there was always a great number in the capital, which the zeal of the inhabitants would have induced them to present, and of which, in any case, the executive might have taken possession. Vincennes contained two hundred cannon of every calibre, and an immense supply of ammunition. With these the heights of Paris might be covered, and

surely no one would have refused his horses for the service. By barricading the streets of the suburbs and the city; by placing the populace behind these barricades; by protecting with artillery certain select positions; by disposing the army on points where the enemy was most to be apprehended; or by throwing the regular forces from the heights on the flank of the invading columns as the configuration of the locality permitted, it was certainly possible to resist the entrance of the enemy into Paris at least for some days. The different localities, properly studied, would have offered resources that might have been turned to profit.

Everybody knows, either as an inhabitant or a visitor, the great capital whose defence was now under discussion. An enemy advancing along the right bank of the Seine must of necessity encounter the half circle of heights that surrounds Paris from Vincennes to Passy, and which encloses the most populous and richest part of the city. From the confluence of the Marne and the Seine, near Charenton, to Passy and Auteuil, Paris is encircled by a chain of heights, sometimes extending en plateau, as at Romainville, sometimes saillant, as at Montmartre, and these offered a most valuable means of resistance, even before a patriot king had covered these positions with impregnable fortifications. To the south and east of this semicircle (keeping still on the right bank of the Seine) are Vincennes, with its forest, its castle, and the encampments of Charonne, of Ménilmontant, and Montreuil. Adverse forces on this side would be almost entirely cut off from all communication with any on the north-east, that is to say, in the plain of St. Denis, unless they had previously taken the precaution of seizing the plateau of Romainville. Should this precaution not be taken, a defensive force, well posted on the plateau of Romainville, could fall on the flank of an enemy coming by Vincennes, or on the flank of an invading column crossing the plain of St. Denis with the design of attacking the barriers of Villette, St. Denis, and Montmartre. This latter column, coming from the north-east across the plain of St. Denis, meets, of necessity, the hillock of St. Chaumont, the heights of Montmartre, of Etoile, and Passy, and should this column advance too far in the direction of Etoile, it would run the risk of being brought to a stand in the wood of Boulogne, and thrown into the Seine, thanks to the retrograde sweep this river makes from St. Cloud to St. Denis.

The heights of Etoile, of Montmartre, of St. Chaumont, of Romainville, being covered with strong redoubts and a great quantity of artillery, the city being barricaded and defended by the populace, part of the army being posted between the barriers most threatened by the enemy, but the bulk reserved

to occupy the plateau of Romainville, a resistance, not invincible certainly, but prolonged for some days, might be opposed to the allies, and give Napoleon time to manœuvre in their rear; and he had reckoned on this, not imagining that the defence of Paris would be limited to a single day, or in other words, to the number of hours that 25,000 men could sustain, in the open country, a combat against 200,000.

But the authorities at Paris had not thought of profiting of local advantages, nor of making use of the citizens; for Napoleon being absent, nobody was capable either of thinking or acting. Those to whom he had delegated his authority scarcely possessed military courage, a quality in which Frenchmen are rarely deficient. Under Joseph and under Clarke, who ought to have commanded, and who did not command, General Hutin was *chef de la Place* at Paris, and Marshal Moncey *chef* of the national guards. Each of these busied himself, without holding communication with the other, with what specially concerned himself. General Hutin, a brave and patriotic man, but long accustomed to doze away his time at Paris, had immediately sent some pieces of cannon to the heights of Montmartre and the mound of St. Chaumont. Not being authorised to employ the horses of private persons to transport the artillery from Vincennes, he had scarcely been able to drag to the heights some pieces of ordnance, fixed on badly finished *plates-formes*, ill supplied with munitions, or furnished with what did not suit the calibre of the guns. Marshal Moncey, always disposed to fulfil his duty, after having vainly demanded muskets for the national guard, had at the last moment obtained the disposable 3000, distributed them, and then drawn up the 6000 national guards he had succeeded in arming; some he placed behind the palisades erected at the barriers; the others he kept as a reserve, in order to send them to the points most threatened by the enemy.

As to the Marshals Marmont and Mortier, the minister Clarke contented himself with prescribing a circuit outside Paris as their field of operations, without examining whether it was advisable to fight a battle outside the walls of the capital. The right of this circuit he confided to Marmont, who would consequently have to defend the south and east of the heights, that is to say, the avenue of Vincennes, the barriers of Trône and Charonne, the plateau of Romainville, and a portion northward behind this plateau, as far as Prés St. Gervais. He confided the left to Mortier, who was to defend the space between the canal of the Ourcq and the Seine, that is to say, the plain of St. Denis.

These two marshals, after all the combats they had sustained during their retreat, had not more than 12,000 men under their

command. They were strengthened by General Compans, who had escaped by a miracle, and who brought with him the young guard recently organised at Paris, and the division Ledru des Essarts, drawn from the depôts. He had about 6000 bayonets. He was placed under the orders of Marshal Marmont. This division was commanded by General Michel, and was placed under the orders of Marshal Mortier. Thanks to this last reinforcement, the active forces of the two marshals amounted to 22,000 men. In their rear, 6000 national guards, some hundred veteran soldiers, and some young men in the artillery service, increased the number of the defenders of the capital to 28,000 or 29,000; and these brave men, as we have just seen, had for their defence some pieces of cannon planted on the heights of Montmartre, of St. Chaumont, and Charonne, and some palisades in front of the barriers.

The marshals, who arrived on the evening of the 29th, had only time to see the war minister, and converse a few moments with him, whilst their troops were taking a little indispensable repose. The confusion was so great that, though a sufficient quantity of provisions had been provided, the soldiers could scarcely get anything to eat. They were supported solely by the kindness of the inhabitants. The two marshals allowed them some repose preparatory to leading them to the spot where they were to fight.

The allied sovereigns were, on the evening of the 29th, at the Chateau of Bondy, and approaching Paris by the north-east, they resolved to attack it by the right bank of the Seine; for no enemy, unless compelled by extraordinary circumstances, would have joined to the natural difficulties of the attack that of an operation executed beyond the Seine, with the obligation to repass this river in case of failure. Being obliged to operate on the right bank of the Seine, the allied generals combined their efforts in a manner conformable to the nature of the locality. They decided to make three simultaneous attacks—one on the east, to be executed by Barclay de Tolly, with Rajeffsky's corps and all the reserves, about 50,000 men—their especial object being to carry, by Rosny and Pantin, the plateau of Romainville; one to the south, to second the proceeding executed by the Prince-Royal of Wurtemberg with his own corps and that of Giulay (nearly 30,000 men), and which was to abut through the wood of Vincennes, at the barriers of Charonne and the Trône; lastly, a third, to the north, in the plain of St. Denis, executed by Blucher, at the head of 90,000 men, and especially directed against the heights of Montmartre, Clichy, and Etoile. Of these three columns, the most advanced in its march was that of Barclay de Tolly. That of Blucher, having come by the Meaux route, and having reached the

Chaussée de Soissons, was on the evening of the 29th farther from the rendezvous than the two others. The Prince de Wurtemberg, who had skirted the Marne, and had crossed it at an advanced stage of his march, was also *en arrière*. It was agreed that all should enter into action as soon as possible.

On our side, the Marshals Marmont and Mortier, having arrived at a very late hour in the evening, and having passed the night between Charenton, Vincennes, and Charonne, were to advance in a southerly direction to occupy the heights. Marmont, with his troops, scaled the escarpments of Charonne and Montreuil, with the intention of establishing themselves on the plateau of Romainville, and on the north of this plateau as far as Prés St. Gervais. Mortier had a still greater distance to traverse. Ascending by the exterior boulevard from Charonne to Belleville, having afterwards to descend on Pantin, La Villette, and La Chapelle, he was ultimately to reach the plain of St. Denis, establish his right wing on the canal of the Ourcq, his left at Clignancourt, at the foot of the heights of Montmartre. He consequently required much more time to fall into line than Marmont. Happily, he was to contend with Blucher, who was also *en retard*, so that he was certain of not being outstripped by the enemy.

Marmont, trusting too easily to the report of an officer, did not believe that the plateau of Romainville was occupied, and on this account had not hastened his march. When he arrived there, Rajeffsky's troops were already in possession. With 1200 men of the Lagrange division, he threw himself on his vanguards, chased them from the plateau, and drove them back on Pantin and Noisy. At the same moment the Ledru des Essarts division took possession of the wood of Romainville, which covers the flank of the heights that border the plain of St. Denis. Marmont distributed his troops in the following manner. He had at his disposal one of the last divisions drawn from the Paris depôts, under the Duke of Padua, his ancient divisions Lagrange and Ricard, the troops that General Compans had brought the evening before, and lastly, some cavalry under Generals Chastel and Bordessoulle. He left his cavalry between Charonne and Vincennes, with orders to defend the foot of the heights on the north side, and to cover the barrier of Trône. He placed the Duke of Padua on his right, on the extreme edge of the plateau of Romainville, in the tallest houses of Bagnolet and Montreuil, that are built *en amphitheatre* on the southern declivity, that their fruit-trees may enjoy the full rays of the sun. He drew up on the centre of the plateau the Lagrange division, backed by the houses of Belleville, the Ricard division on the left in the wood of Romainville, and lastly, on the northern declivity, the Ledru des Essarts division of Compans' corps. He

placed at the foot, in the plain, at Prés St. Gervais, the Boyer de Rebeval division. The Michel division, that awaited Mortier, to serve under his orders, guarded in his absence La Grand and La Petite Villette.

The sound of musketry and the roar of cannon awakened at an early hour the Parisians, who, to say the truth, had slept little during the night, and Joseph, accompanied by the war minister, the minister of police, engineer and artillery officers, had established his headquarters at the summit of Montmartre. Barclay de Tolly, though convinced that when the Prince-Royal of Wurtemberg on the south, and Blucher on the north, would fall into line, the contest would soon turn to the advantage of the allies, still did not wish to leave the defenders of Paris the first success of the day. He consequently resolved to retake the plateau of Romainville, and to employ for that purpose a part of his reserve. This reserve was composed of infantry, cavalry, and grenadiers. General Paskewitch was, with a brigade of the 2nd division of grenadiers, to scale the plateau on the Rosny side; he was also to attack it on the south, advancing by Montreuil with the 2nd brigade of this 2nd division, and with Count Pahlen's cavalry. The 1st division of grenadiers was confided to Prince Eugène of Wurtemberg, to attack Pantin and Prés St. Gervais, in the plain to the north.

This attack, conducted with vigour, was in the commencement successful. General Mezenzoff, who had been repulsed in the morning, now reinforced by the grenadiers, remounted the plateau, spite of the Lagrange division, and succeeded in taking possession of it. On the right, the 2nd brigade of grenadiers, after having turned the plateau by Montreuil and Bagnolet, forced the Duke of Padua's division, by outflanking them, to retrograde. We certainly lost ground, though the resistance of our soldiers was heroic, whether we consider the number or quality of the adverse troops, who were of the allies' best.

However, though we lost ground, we kept the enemy in check. In fact, the Russian cuirassiers, led up on the plateau, tried to charge our infantry, but were covered with grape, and stopped by our bayonets. In falling back from Romainville on Belleville, the plateau growing narrower, our troops had the advantage of concentrating. On the right we found a support in the houses of Bagnolet; on the left, in the wood of Romainville; and our soldiers, dispersing *en tirailleurs*, inflicted severe losses on the enemy. Our artillery, profiting of the local advantages—for the plateau rises in retrograding towards Belleville—poured volumes of grape on the Russian grenadiers, and at each discharge overthrew entire lines. During this time Ledru des Essarts' young soldiers had reconquered, tree by tree, the wood of Romainville,

and thus outflanked the Russian troops that occupied the wider portion of the plateau. At the very foot of the plateau, towards the north side, General Compans had remained master of Pantin, with the aid of the Boyer de Rebeval division, and kept Prés St. Gervais by the help of the Michel division. He had even driven beyond the two villages the Prince of Wurtemberg, who had attempted to take possession of them at the head of the first division of grenadiers.

Marshal Mortier having at length taken up a position in the plain of St. Denis, had placed the Curial and Charpentier divisions of the young guard at La Villette, the Christiani division of the old guard at La Chapelle, and his cavalry at the foot of Montmartre itself.

It was ten in the morning, and if we had, independent of the troops that covered the environs of Paris, a column of 10,000 veteran soldiers to take the offensive, we should have been able to give the allies at this moment a severe check. But, far from being in a position to take the offensive, we had scarcely the means to defend our positions. In this state of things, Prince Schwarzenberg waiting his two wings that were *en retard*, and our two marshals being reduced to the defensive, both parties confined themselves to a cannonade and some sharpshooting, the superiority on our side being marked, owing to the zeal of our troops and the advantage of position.

At this hour Joseph was holding a council on the hillock of Montmartre, where he had fixed himself. Several officers who had been sent to the marshals returned, with the assurance that they and their soldiers were determined to die to the last man, but added sad presentiments for the result of the contest, for they almost felt certain that the capital must be surrendered. This intelligence agitated Joseph deeply, who feared not the danger but the humiliation, and who dreaded above all things becoming the prisoner of the allies. From the heights of Montmartre dark and voluminous masses, led on by Blucher, were seen to cross the plain of St. Denis, and officers coming from the neighbourhood of Vincennes asserted that they saw on the east and south a fresh army that was turning Paris, and trying to enter by the barriers of Charonne and Trône. All evidence, both visual and oral, concurred in announcing an imminent catastrophe. Joseph debated the subject with the ministers that had accompanied him, with the engineer and artillery officers, and all were of opinion that within a few hours Paris should be given up. In fact, the defence being reduced to a battle fought in the open plain, with odds of ten to one, of the result there could be no doubt, however brave our soldiers and generals might be. Confronted by such certainty, Joseph determined to withdraw. Having learned by

reconnaissance that Cossacks were already seen advancing along the Revolte route and at the border of the Bois de Boulogne, he hastily set off, ordering the ministers to follow, as had been agreed, when the last moment should have arrived. His sole instructions to the two marshals at parting were to continue the defence as long as possible, and then surrender on conditions that would guarantee the safety of Paris, and good treatment to the inhabitants.

During these proceedings the attack had made inevitable progress. On the north, that is to say, in the plain of St. Denis, Marshal Blucher had traversed the distance that separated him from our positions. General Langeron had driven our weak vanguards from Aubervilliers and St. Denis, and sent his cavalry and light infantry by the road of La Revolte, as far as the edge of the Bois de Boulogne. The bulk of his infantry advanced towards the foot of Montmartre, whilst General d'York's corps, turning to the left (the left of the allies), advanced on La Chatelle by the St. Denis route, and the corps of Kleist and Woronzoff, turning still more to the left, marched on La Villette. Prince Schwarzenberg, seeing Blucher in line, asked him to send a reinforcement to assist Prince Eugène of Wurtemberg to carry Pantin, Prés St. Gervais—in a word, all the villages situated at the foot of the Romainville plateau. The Kotzler Prussian division, the Prussian and Baden guards, were then sent to the assistance of Rajeffsky's corps, and crossed the canal of the Ourcq, near the Rouvray farm, to join in the first attack.

Whilst these movements were being executed to the north, the Prince-Royal of Wurtemberg had, on the south, cleared the distance that separated him from the point of attack, and came to aid the allies. After having crossed the bridge of Neuilly-sur-Marne, and left Giulay's corps to guard his rear, he had marched his forces in two columns, the one skirting the banks of the Marne, the other crossing by the shortest way the forest of Vincennes. The first column had carried the bridge of St. Maur, made a circuit of the forest, and attacked Charenton by the right bank. The national guards of the neighbourhood, who, with l'Ecole d'Alfort, defended the bridge of Charenton, finding themselves attacked in the rear, were forced, after a valiant resistance, to abandon the post, and march across the country to the left of the Seine. This adverse column having attained its object, which was to occupy all the bridges of the Marne, to hinder any auxiliary corps from coming to disturb the attack on Paris, began to *tirailler*, with the national guard before the Bercy barrier. The Prince of Wurtemberg's second column had crossed the bridge of Vincennes in a straight line, and assisted Count Pahlen, as well as the troops of Rajeffsky

and Paskewitch, who were engaged in attacking Montreuil, Bagnolet, and Charonne.

All the allied forces being now in line, the action recommenced with increased violence. To the north, Prince Eugène of Wurtemberg's division, assisted by the Russian grenadiers and by the Prussian troops recently arrived, fell on Pantin and Prés St. Gervais, but was warmly received by the Boyer de Rebeval and Michel divisions of the young guard, commanded by General Compans. For a moment the allies succeeded in seizing the two villages; but our young soldiers, planting their backs against the foot of the heights, where they were supported by a well-posted artillery, recovered their spirits, and again entered the villages, where the carnage became fearful. The enemy did not succeed on this side, notwithstanding the vigour of their attack.

The defence was not less energetic on the plateau of Romainville, but was less successful. The troops of Generals Helfreich and Mezenzoff, supported by the grenadiers of Paskewitch, though at first repulsed, had ultimately succeeded in taking the position. Having seized Montreuil and Bagnolet, they had established themselves on the southern declivity of the plateau, and being well seconded by the troops of Count Pahlen and the Prince-Royal of Wurtemberg, who were operating between Vincennes and Charonne, they had taken possession of the nearest houses of Ménilmontant. The Duke of Padua's division of reserve, which formed Marmont's right, being outflanked, had been obliged to fall back, and leave uncovered the Lagrange and Ricard divisions, that occupied the centre. On Marmont's left the Ledru des Essarts division, briskly pushed from tree to tree in the wood of Romainville, at length lost the wood altogether.

Finding himself thus pressed on both flanks, Marmont conceived the idea of directing his centre against the enemy that was advancing in a serried mass, their front protected by artillery, and the wings supported by strong detachments of heavy cavalry. The marshal put himself at the head of four battalions formed *en colonne d'attaque*, and charged the Russian grenadiers that marched in the front line. Twelve pieces of cannon loaded with grape were discharged against our soldiers, who sustained the fire with heroic firmness, and continued to advance. But they were at the same moment attacked in front by the Russian grenadiers, and in flank by the *chevaliers gardes*, led on by Miloradovitch.

Overpowered by numbers, Marmont's four battalions were obliged to fall back, after a hand-to-hand fight, sustained with positive fury. The marshal fell back with his troops on Belleville, and was near sinking under the mass of assailants, both

horse and foot, when a brave officer named Ghesseler, ambushed on the right, in a little wood called Bruyères, of which at present the memory alone remains, dashed at the head of 200 men on the flank of the adverse column, and by making a diversion in favour of the marshal, succeeded in facilitating his retreat on Belleville. At the same moment the wood of Romainville was definitely abandoned; and the plateau being evacuated on every side, the defence was carried back—at the centre, on Belleville; on the right, towards Ménilmontant, which the Padua division had taken possession of; on the left, to the declivity of Beauregarde, where the Ledru des Essarts division had found shelter. At the foot of the latter, the Boyer and Michel divisions struggled perseveringly. They had lost Pantin, but they defended Prés St. Gervais with intense obstinacy.

On every side the combat was furious; men fell by thousands, especially amongst the allies, who received on all sides a plunging fire. In the plain of St. Denis, Kleist and Woronzoff had attacked La Villette, defended by the Curial division; York attacked, before the eyes of Marshal Marmont, La Chapelle, defended by the Christiani division. In front of Clignancourt, Blucher's squadrons were engaged with General Belliard's cavalry, and seldom got the advantage.

Thus, from the plain of St. Denis to the barrier of Trône, the combat was prolonged with varying success. Our line had fallen back; but the allies had already lost 10,000 men, whilst our loss amounted to only 6000. Our worn-out soldiers were supported by the thought that Paris was in their rear, and 24,000 men struggled without extraordinary loss against 170,000. Once the arrival of Napoleon was announced—it was the sudden appearance of General Dejean that had occasioned this false report—and the cry of *Vive l'Empereur!* propagated with electric rapidity, echoed from rank to rank. Our troops, reanimated by hope, rushed furiously on the enemy. On both sides the combat raged with a kind of madness; for the one party was striving by a single stroke to attain the great object of the war, and the other was endeavouring to snatch their country from ruin.

At this time an event occurred at Vincennes which must ever redound to the honour of the youth of France. In the advance of the Trône barrier, there was a battery served by veteran soldiers and by pupils of the Polytechnic School, which Marmont, exclusively occupied with what was passing on the Romainville plateau, had left almost without support. This battery having advanced too far on the avenue of Vincennes, in order to play on Pahlen's cavalry, was turned by some squadrons that, passing by St. Mandé, made an attack in the

rear. The brave pupils of the school, standing unflinchingly by their guns, resisted valiantly, and were fortunately aided by the national guard, posted at the Trône barrier, and by a detachment of dragoons. The latter, rushing on the guns, succeeded in retaking them. The battery was brought back to the heights of Charonne; and there, assisted by a crowd of the populace armed with fowling-pieces, our brave youths continued to pour a destructive fire on the enemy.

Belleville was the key of the position; as long as this point, which crowned the chain of heights, was not carried, the mass of enemies fighting on the north, in front of La Villette, La Chapelle, and Montmartre, and those that fought on the south, between Vincennes and Charonne, could make no serious progress. The curved line of the allies was, as it were, stopped near the centre at a fixed point, which was Belleville. Belleville, in fact, commanded the Romainville plateau itself. Numerous *clôtures*, joined to the advantage of the position, rendered resistance there more easy. Marmont, established on this spot with the débris of the Lagrange, Ricard, Padua, and Ledru des Essarts divisions, having besides at his command a large quantity of field artillery, kept his ground against numerous assailants, and sent word to Joseph, who had authorised the marshals to negotiate, that he did not yet feel himself obliged to surrender. The marshals' officer, who carried the message, found that Joseph had set off before he arrived, and he returned without having been able to fulfil his mission.

Meanwhile, the fatal hour was drawing nigh. Prince Schwarzenberg, not wishing to terminate the day without having carried the decisive point, ordered two attacking columns to advance: one towards the south, passing between Ménilmontant and the cemetery of Père la Chaise, was to take possession of the exterior boulevard, and so separate Belleville from the enceinte of Paris; the other column, advancing to the north, was ordered to seize, at any expense, Prés St. Gervais, La Petite-Villette, and the hillock of St. Chaumont, and finish by joining the other column coming from the south.

To conquer or perish was at this moment the fixed determination of the allies, and it behoved them to overcome every obstacle without loss of time, for there was a possibility of Napoleon's arriving at any moment, and had he found the allies repulsed from Paris, condign would have been their punishment for having dared to appear before the walls. About three in the afternoon the action recommenced furiously. Brigadier Paixhan's artillery, who proved on this day what can be done with well-posted heavy artillery, had placed eight guns of heavy calibre beyond Charonne, on the declivity of Ménilmontant, four on the north reverse of Belleville, and

eight on the hillock of St. Chaumont. He took his place beside his cannon, charged with grape, accompanied by his gunners, some veteran soldiers, others youths from the schools, and waited until the enemy, who were masters of the plain, should essay to ascend the heights. In fact, the Russian grenadiers advanced, some to the south of the plateau, by Charonne, others marched straight to the plateau, in front of Belleville, and others approached the same point by the north, through Prés St. Gervais. Suddenly they are covered with grape; entire lines are overthrown. However, they sustain the fire steadily, and ascend on the south the declivities of Ménilmontant, and passing by the exterior boulevard, attack Belleville in the rear; Belleville, where Marshal Marmont is desperately defending himself. The other division of grenadiers who, with the Prussians and the Badeners, were attacking Pantin, Prés St. Gervais, and Petite-Villette, and had snatched them from the Boyer and Michel divisions, now almost destroyed, ascended the hillock of St. Chaumont, under the plunging fire of Brigadier-General Paixhan's batteries, carried the hillock, which, for want of troops, was not defended by infantry, and joined the column that arrived from the south, by Charonne and Ménilmontant. The enemy, having reached the exterior boulevard by the northern and southern declivities, succeeded in establishing themselves between Belleville and the barrier of that name, which they nearly carried.

On receiving intelligence of these events, Marshal Marmont, who had throughout kept his ground at Belleville, seeing himself cut off from the enceinte of Paris, assembled his remaining forces, and supported by Generals Pelleport and Meynadier and Colonel Fabvier, rushes, sword in hand, on the Russian grenadiers who begin to enter the high street of the Temple Faubourg. He drives them back, closes the barrier against them, and resumes the defence at the *octroi* wall.

Mortier, on his side, struggled heroically in the plain of St. Denis, between La Villette and La Chapelle. La Villette, on his right, defended, against Kleist and d'York, by the Curial and Charpentier divisions, was at length invaded by a host of enemies. At this spectacle Mortier, who occupied La Chapelle with the Christiani division of the old guard, takes a part of this division, and making a movement from left to right, entered Villette at the point of the bayonet, and succeeded in driving out the Prussian guard, after a fearful carnage. But soon fresh masses of the enemy attacking Grande-Villette in the rear, by the canal of the Ourcq, and entering between La Villette and La Chapelle, Mortier is forced to abandon the plain, and fall back on the barriers. At the same instant Langeron advances towards the foot of Montmartre. Langeron, a Frenchman,

leads the enemy against Paris! Advancing towards Montmartre, he expects to be enveloped in clouds of grape, but is surprised to find these heights silent; he ascends and seizes the few pieces of artillery that had been placed there, and which were feebly guarded by some of the sapper brigade. He marches afterwards to the Clichy barrier, which the national guards, before Marshal Moncey's eyes, were bravely defending, and with a courage that proves what aids might have been obtained from the Parisian populace.

Such was the termination of two and twenty years of unprecedented triumphs, whose scenes of action had been successively Milan, Venice, Rome, Naples, Cairo, Madrid, Lisbon, Vienna, Dresden, Berlin, Warsaw, Moscow, and which now closed so disastrously before the walls of Paris.

No preparations having been made for a prolonged defence, by barricaded streets, and the population drawn up behind the barriers, with troops in reserve; the sole defence having consisted in a battle fought outside the walls of Paris with a handful of soldiers against a formidable army, and that battle being inevitably lost, it was not to be supposed that the wall *d'octroi* could now stop the enemy's progress. It was better to spare Paris an unprofitable misfortune. Marmont, seeing no other resource, thought the time was come for using the powers conferred by Joseph on the two marshals commanding the army outside Paris, and had successively sent two officers to Prince Schwarzenberg to propose a suspension of arms. The battle raged with such fury that one of the delegates had not been able to cross to the enemy's quarters, and the other had been wounded. Marmont then sent a third.

At this moment General Dejean arrived all breathless, to announce that Napoleon, learning that the allies had marched on the capital, had changed his course, and was advancing in all haste to Paris; that if the marshals could only hold out two days, they would see him appear at the head of considerable forces; that they ought therefore to resist at any cost, and when they could no longer resist, they should endeavour to cajole the enemy by parleying. In fact, Napoleon, in this extremity, the Congress of Chatillon being dissolved, had written to his father-in-law for the purpose of resuming the negotiations, and authorised him to say so to Prince Schwarzenberg, in order to obtain some hours' suspension of arms. Marshal Mortier received General Dejean amid a hail of projectiles, and pointing out to him the débris of his divisions, which still disputed the possession of La Villette and La Chapelle, he quickly convinced him of the impossibility of prolonging this species of resistance. It was evident there was nothing left to do but to apply to Prince Schwarzenberg, and the marshal accordingly

wrote him a few words on a drum-head pierced with balls. He said that Napoleon resumed negotiations on bases that the allies could not reject, and that, *en attendant*, it was desirable, for the sake of humanity, to stop the effusion of blood.

An officer, bearer of this letter, set off at full gallop, crossed the ranks of both armies, and succeeded in reaching Prince Schwarzenberg. The latter replied that he had received no intelligence of the resumption of negotiations, and could not, in the absence of such information, stop the battle, but he was willing to suspend the butchery on the immediate surrender of Paris. At the same moment the third officer sent by Marshal Marmont having succeeded in obtaining an interview with the generalissimo, and having announced that the marshals, in order to save Paris, were ready to sign a capitulation, the parley assumed a more serious turn, and a meeting with the two marshals was appointed at La Villette. They repaired there, and found M. de Nesselrode, with several plenipotentiaries. Without losing a moment, the question of a suspension of hostilities was entered on. Divers pretensions were at first put forward by the representatives of the allied armies. They demanded that the troops who had defended Paris should lay down their arms. A movement of indignation was the sole reply vouchsafed by the two marshals. Then the adverse delegates reduced their demands to requiring the two marshals to retire into Brittany with those troops, in order that they might not exercise any influence on the sequel of the war. The marshals again answered in the negative, and demanded permission to retire where they pleased. These demands were acceded to, provided they evacuated the city that night. This condition was accepted, and it was agreed that some officers should meet in the evening to regulate the details of the evacuation of the capital.

Such was the celebrated capitulation of Paris, which cannot be reasonably condemned, for it was a matter of necessity on the part of the marshals. They had certainly done all that could be expected of them, since with 23,000 or 24,000 men they had during an entire day held their ground against 170,000, of whom 100,000 were actually engaged, and 6000 of their troops were put hors de combat; they killed or wounded double that number of the enemy. Let us imagine what would have happened if Paris, holding out three or four days longer against the allies, they had been surprised by Napoleon in their rear, at the head of 70,000 soldiers! And that it was not thus—whom shall we blame, if not in the first place Napoleon, who, having decided too late to avow his real position, had not got the necessary defensive works executed under his own inspection round Paris! he who, scattering his resources from Alexandria to Dantzig, had not 50,000 muskets to give the Parisians;

and after the emperor, we must blame those who, delegated to represent him in his absence, had displayed so little activity, intelligence, and energy, and had reduced the defence of the capital to a battle of 24,000 men against 170,000!

In negotiating for their *corps d'armée*, the two marshals had not been able to make any stipulation relative to the city of Paris and the government that resided within its walls, for they had neither the powers nor the mission to do so. Moreover, all the ministers had retired with Joseph. The Duke of Rovigo, faithful to what had been agreed on—for it was arranged that the ministers should follow the empress-regent when Paris should be no longer tenable—had set out, leaving the two prefects—one of whom directed the administration of the capital, and the other the police—the care of maintaining tranquillity in the city. There was consequently no longer a government; and the void whose ill effects had been so frequently pointed out by those that opposed the departure of the empress-regent was at length created.

The man destined soon to fill this void—M. de Talleyrand, whom by a secret instinct Napoleon had foreseen as the author of his fall, and whom the public, by an instinct as correct, looked upon as the necessary author of an approaching revolution—M. de Talleyrand found himself at this moment in a state of extreme perplexity. In virtue of his rank as grand dignitary he ought to follow the regent; but by leaving, he rejected the great part that awaited his acceptance; and by not leaving, he exposed himself to be taken in an overt act of treason, which might involve serious consequences, if Napoleon, by a sudden stroke of good fortune—always possible in his case—should reappear as conqueror before the gates of the capital. To extricate himself from this embarrassment, he sought an interview with the Duke of Rovigo, to obtain permission to remain at Paris, saying that in the absence of the entire government, he would be able to render important services. The Duke of Rovigo, suspecting that these services would be rendered to some other than to Napoleon, refused the desired permission, which in fact he had not power to accord. M. de Talleyrand sought the prefects, but could not obtain what he desired; and not knowing how to cover with a specious pretext his prolonged stay at Paris, he took the resolution of stepping into his carriage, and affect at least a willingness to follow the regent. Towards the close of the day, as the battle ceased to rage, he presented himself, without passport and with great travelling pomp, at the barrier leading to the Orleans route. The barrier was occupied by the national guards, highly irritated against those who, during the past two days, had deserted the city. A kind of tumult was raised about M. de Talleyrand's

carriage; some contemporaries regard this as a national outburst, others believe it to have been pre-arranged. His passport was demanded; he had none; a murmur was raised against this neglect of an essential formality; and then, with an affected deference to the opinion of the brave defenders of Paris, he retraced his steps and returned to his mansion. The greater part of those who contributed to detain him, and who were not desirous of a revolution, little suspected they had detained the man who was about to effect one.

Not being fully satisfied as to the formality of his conduct, M. de Talleyrand repaired to the house of Marshal Marmont, who, the battle now over, had hastened to his dwelling, situate in the Faubourg Poissonnière. People of every class flocked thither, seeking on some side a government, and crowding round the man who at this moment seemed to represent one, since he was head of the only force existing in the capital. Marshal Mortier was subordinate to him on all important occasions. The two prefects, a portion of the municipal body, and several distinguished personages were present. Every one spoke of the late events with emotion, and according to his individual sentiments. Seeing the marshal, whose face was blackened with powder, and his coat rent by balls, the assembly felicitated him on his courageous defence of Paris, and then proceeded to talk of the situation of affairs. There was a species of unanimity in condemning what they called the cowardly desertion of those that Napoleon had left in the capital to defend it, and against Napoleon himself, whose mad policy had brought the armies of Europe to the foot of Montmartre. The royalists —and there was a considerable number present—did not hesitate to say that the French ought to throw off an insupportable yoke, and boldly named the Bourbons. Two influential bankers, MM. Peregaux and Lafitte, the one connected by the ties of blood, the other by those of friendship, with the Duke of Ragusa, attracted attention by the vivacity of their language. The second especially, whose secular success had just commenced, and whose versatile and brilliant talents had attracted general attention, spoke strongly, and went so far as to exclaim, on hearing the name of the Bourbons pronounced—"Well, be it so, give us the Bourbons, if you wish, but with a constitution that will guarantee us against a fearful despotism, and with peace, of which we have been so long deprived." This unanimity of feeling against the imperial despotism, carried so far as to make the upper bourgeoisie consider the Bourbons, with whom they had never come in contact, very acceptable, produced an extraordinary impression on all present. It was suggested in the assembly that they ought not to think exclusively of the army, that the capital too ought to engage their

attention. Marshal Marmont replied that he was not empowered to treat for the capital. It was therefore thought proper that the prefects, with a deputation from the municipal council and the national guard, should be deputed to wait on the allied sovereigns, and demand from them that treatment to which Paris had a right from civilised princes, who, since the passage of the Rhine, had announced themselves as the liberators and not the conquerors of France.

Whilst these discussions were at the height, M. de Talleyrand arrived. He had a private conversation with Marshal Marmont. He wished at first to obtain something resembling an authorisation of his stay at Paris, the which no person was less in a position to grant than the marshal; but he began to set less value on this permission when he saw what was passing around him. He instantly conceived the idea of making this visit facilitate a *dénouement* which he now began to regard as inevitable, and which should of necessity be accomplished by him. No man was more open to flattery than Marshal Marmont, and none knew better than M. de Talleyrand how to administer the draught. The marshal had, during this campaign, committed serious errors, but discoverable only by military men, whilst he had at the same time displayed heroic bravery. On this very day especially, the 30th March, he had acquired lasting claims on the gratitude of his country. His face, his hands, his dress, bore testimony to what he had done. M. de Talleyrand praised his courage, his talents, and especially his understanding, very much superior, as he affirmed, to that of the other marshals. The Duke of Ragusa, as usual, became very much elated when told that he was endowed with high intelligence, in which his fellow-commanders were deficient, and it must be acknowledged that in this respect he possessed what they could lay no claim to. He listened, consequently, with a sentiment of profound satisfaction to what the arch-tempter, who was preparing his ruin, told him. M. de Talleyrand took some trouble to point out the serious position of affairs, and the necessity of extricating France from the hands that had destroyed her; he gave the marshal to understand that under existing circumstances, a soldier who had defended Paris so gloriously, and who had still under his command the men at whose head he had fought, possessed the means of saving his country, which had now no master. M. de Talleyrand went no further, for he knew that no person is seduced at a first attempt. He took his departure, and left the unfortunate Marmont intoxicated with vanity; and now, amid the disasters of France, he sketched for himself, in imagination, the most brilliant destiny, whilst the simple-minded and upright soldier, who had been his colleague, on this same 30th March, Mortier, whose face, too, was blackened with powder,

devoured his grief in the loneliness to which his modesty and uprightness consigned him.

Night was already advanced; the officers, chosen by the marshals, were about arranging with Prince Schwarzenberg's representatives the details of the evacuation of Paris; the two prefects, with a deputation selected from the members of the municipal council and officers of the national guards, left the Hôtel de Ville for the Chateau de Bondy, where they intended to make an appeal to the better feelings of the victorious sovereigns.

At this very moment Napoleon arrived before the gates of Paris. We have already seen that, on the 23rd March, he stopped in the neighbourhood of St. Dizier to give his troops some rest, and collect the garrisons that were to reinforce his army. On the 24th and 25th he operated diverse movements between St. Dizier and Vassy, still flattering himself that he had drawn Prince Schwarzenberg after him, and in this belief he was confirmed by the reports of his lieutenants, who, still retaining the impression received on the day of Arcis-sur-Aube, fancied they saw on every side innumerable masses of the enemy. Napoleon had determined to ascertain the exact state of things by profiting of the first opportunity to reconnoitre closely the numerous troop of cavalry that followed in his track. Meanwhile, M. de. Caulaincourt, inconsolable that the negotiations had been broken off, insisted that an effort should be made to resume them, which Napoleon seemed little inclined to do. A favourable circumstance had, however, occurred, and M. de Caulaincourt had done himself a sort of violence to turn it to profit. General Piré, reconnoitring with the light cavalry, had taken prisoners Baron de Wessenberg, and M. de Vitrolles himself, who was returning from his mission to the Count d'Artois, and who, happily for him, was not recognised. M. de Caulaincourt, seconded by Berthier, had succeeded in obtaining the liberation of M. de Wessenberg, and sent him with a letter to Prince Metternich, in which M. de Caulaincourt declared that Napoleon was at length resigned to make great sacrifices, without, however, saying what they were. It was all that M. de Caulaincourt had been able to obtain from his master, though he would have wished to be more precise in these new overtures, in order that they might be better received. M. de Wessenberg, having been set free on condition of fulfilling the mission, undertook it, and passing M. de Vitrolles for one of his servants, saved him from imminent danger.

An opportunity of making a close reconnaissance having offered on the 26th, Napoleon took care to profit by it. Whilst he was between St. Dizier and Vassy, on the left of the Marne, filling the entire country between the Marne and the Aube with

his troops, he perceived a vast number of cavalry on the right bank of the Marne, a little above St. Dizier, in the direction of Vitry. At the sight of the enemy appearing in force, there was no time for hesitation; it was necessary to advance, in the first place, to give battle, and in the second place, to learn who the enemy might be. Notwithstanding the serious disadvantage of crossing a river in presence of troops drawn up in line of battle, the French marched straight to the Hœricourt ford, and crossed the Marne en masse at that point, with the exception of Oudinot's corps, that was sent a little higher up, to cross at St. Dizier. The enemy was embarrassed on discovering they had to do with the entire French army. Still, the enemy had ten thousand horse, and some thousand light infantry, that charged us at the moment we were crossing the Marne. They got the reception they deserved. The cavalry of the guard, after a sharp contest with the enemy's squadrons, routed them completely. They were obliged to fall back, and Wintzingerode, for it was he, seeing that he had imprudently implicated himself, determined to regain the Bar-sur-Aube route, notwithstanding the disadvantage of defiling within range of St. Dizier, of which Oudinot had taken possession. We charged *à outrance* the retreating enemy, and whilst they were sharply attacked in the rear, they were at the same time taken in flank by our infantry that debouched by St. Dizier. Two battalions of infantry having in vain attempted to form in square, the brave Letort rushed on them at the head of the dragoons of the guard, and cut them in pieces. The impetuosity of the charge was such, that the dragoons continued their course, without regarding the Russian infantry that they had broken and ridden past. The latter, who had feigned to yield, seeing the dragoons pass, tried to form again into line, and fired on them from the rear. Our horse, retracing their steps, cut them down without mercy. This pursuit lasted till night, and our troops returned to St. Dizier, after having killed or made prisoners four thousand of Wintzingerode's rearguard that had been sent to follow and deceive us. We captured, besides, thirty pieces of cannon. This victory only cost us three or four hundred men. A brilliant trophy—the last, alas! of this heroic and fatal campaign.

The next day, the 27th, Napoleon having learned that the enemy still held Vitry, approached to take the place, but an old wall, and a moat filled with water, were obstacles that presented some difficulty. Macdonald, whom our late misfortunes had irritated, made the remark to Napoleon with some bitterness, and an altercation on the subject ensued between them, when one of the enemy's bulletins, seized by our soldiers, was brought. This bulletin related, after the enemy's fashion, the fatal battle

of Fère-Champenoise. This missive, though the date was incorrect, proved beyond all doubt that the allies had marched on Paris. After the sad confirmation of this fact, obtained from some prisoners, Napoleon returned to St. Dizier, deeply touched by this intelligence, and still more deeply affected by the impression produced on those about him. Spirits already restless, thinking of what might have happened since they left for Lorraine, no longer restrained themselves, when they heard that the allies had marched on Paris; they burst out with a species of fury against the mad obstinacy of Napoleon, to whom, since the return of M. de Caulaincourt, they attributed the breaking off of the negotiations. They did not hesitate to say, that, having caused the destruction of part of the army in this campaign, he was now about to cause the destruction of the capital itself, and that whilst he was fighting uselessly in the rear of the allies, they would perhaps avenge the burning of Moscow by setting Paris in flames. The commotion soon became so great as to call for interference, and the following day, the 28th, Napoleon deliberated, in company with Berthier, Ney, and Caulaincourt, what was to be done. Could they only have known that Paris was beyond help, and that the best course was to persevere in a project, hazardous certainly, but which now offered the only remaining chance of safety—that of allowing the allies to effect a revolution in the capital, and fall upon their rear with the 120,000 men that Napoleon could have assembled. But entertaining the hope that Paris was not utterly lost, it was natural to march thither as quickly as possible; and since Napoleon had not succeeded in turning the allied generals from the capital by his last movement, he might at least endeavour to surprise them at the moment when they should be engaged before the walls of the great city, and fall upon them like a thunder-crash.

Such were the sentiments of Ney and Berthier, and they warmly maintained their opinion. So strong was the general feeling, that to hasten to Paris was become a universal passion.

Napoleon, who was not led by emotion, thought differently. He had marched towards the fortresses to strengthen his army, and return at the head of 100,000 men, a force that, under his command, would make the allies tremble. Paris being taken, or in danger of being taken, was not a sufficient reason for being turned from this great object; for no sooner would the allies know of his being at the head of such a force than they would hasten to quit Paris, or if they remained, pay dearly for the satisfaction of having appeared there for a moment. Napoleon attached little importance to the idea of a political revolution, because that, spite of his sagacity, he had never realised to himself the discredit into which his government had fallen.

He saw things only from a military point of view; and under this aspect, he thought it more important to have 100,000 at his command than to save Paris. However, unsupported in his opinion, accused of insane obstinacy, he was obliged to soothe the universal affliction by giving up his own opinion and resolving to assist the capital. But if he were to go there at all, it would be necessary to march there immediately, as, in order to arrive in time, there was not a moment to lose. Napoleon took his resolution instantly, and set out that very hour, crossing straight from the Marne to the Aube, from the Aube to the Seine, in order to reach Paris by the left bank of the latter river, and so avoid encountering the allied armies.

Having left St. Dizier on the 28th, he passed the night with the army at Doulevent, and resumed his march on the 29th, crossed the Aube at Dolancourt, and slept at Troyes, leaving in the rear his army, that could not travel distances as rapidly as he. En route, he received a message from M. de Lavallette, informing him of the danger of the capital, the mass of enemies that threatened Paris from without, and the activity of plots that threatened it from within. On receiving this message Napoleon hastened his march. On the morning of the 30th he reached Villeneuve-l'Archevêque, and there, ceasing to march in military fashion, wishing to encourage the Parisians by his presence, he travelled post, sometimes on horseback, sometimes in a miserable chariot, and thus, accompanied by M. de Caulaincourt and Berthier, he advanced towards Paris. He sent forward, as we have seen, General Dejean, to annonnce his arrival, and earnestly urge the marshals to prolong their resistance. About midnight, having travelled at full speed the entire day, either on horseback or *en voiture*, he at length reached Fromenteau, all impatient to know what was going on. A large number of cavalry was seen advancing, preceded by some officers. Without hesitation Napoleon called these officers. "Who goes there?" he asked. "General Belliard," replied the leader. It was, in fact, General Belliard, who, in compliance with the conditions of the capitulation of Paris, was going to Fontainebleau, to find a suitable position for the troops of the two marshals. Napoleon sprang from his carriage, seized General Belliard by the arm, led him to the roadside, and overwhelmed him so with questions that he had scarcely time to reply. "Where is the army?" said he immediately. "Sire, the army is coming up." "Where is the enemy?" "At the gates of Paris." "And who occupies Paris?" "Nobody: it is evacuated." "What, evacuated? and my son—my wife—my government—where are they?" "On the Loire." "On the Loire! Who counselled such a proceeding?" "But, sire, it was said to be in obedience to your orders." "My

orders had no such meaning. But Joseph—Clarke—Marmont —Mortier, what has become of them? What have they done? "Sire, we have not seen either Joseph or Clarke the entire day. As to Marmont and Mortier, they have behaved like honest men. The troops have acted admirably. Even the national guards, wherever they were exposed to fire, vied with the soldiers. They bravely defended the heights of Belleville as well as the opposite declivity, looking towards Villette. They even defended Montmartre, where there were only a few pieces of cannon, and the enemy, believing the place to be better defended, sent a column along the Revolte route to turn Montmartre, thus running the risk of being driven into the Seine. Ah, sire! had we had a reserve of 10,000 men—had you been there, we would have thrown the allies into the Seine, saved Paris, and avenged the honour of our country!" "Undoubtedly, had I been there; but I cannot be everywhere! And Clarke and Joseph, where were they? And my 200 Vincennes cannon, what has been done with them? And my brave Parisians, why were not they called into action?" "We do not know, sire. We were alone, and we did our best. The enemy lost at least 12,000 men." "I ought to have expected it," cried Napoleon. "Joseph lost me Spain, and now he loses me France. I ought to have believed that poor Rovigo, who told me that Clarke was a coward, a traitor, and moreover, a stupid. But let us have done with complaints, we must repair the evil. Caulaincourt—my carriage."

Having finished these words, Napoleon began to walk in the direction of Paris, ordering everybody to follow him, as if he could thus gain time. But Belliard and the others endeavoured to dissuade him. "It is too late," said Belliard, "to go to Paris; the army has been obliged to leave; the enemy will soon arrive, if they are not already there." "But," replied Napoleon, "I shall lead on the army again, and drive the enemy out of Paris; my brave Parisians will hear my voice, and they will all rise and drive the barbarians beyond their walls." "Ah, sire, it is too late; the infantry is even now following me—besides, we have signed a capitulation that forbids our return." "A capitulation; and who has been so cowardly as to sign one?" "Honest men, sire, who had no alternative."

During this colloquy, Napoleon is still advancing, refusing to listen to any remonstrance, and calling for his carriage, which Caulaincourt does not bring, when an infantry officer is seen advancing. It was Curial. Napoleon calls him, and then learns that the infantry is on the spot, that is to say, three or four leagues distant from Paris, and that the time for returning to the capital is past. Conquered by facts, by the explanations he receives, Napoleon pauses at the two fountains that rise on

the Juvisy route, sits beside the waters, covers his face with his hands, and remains some time plunged in profound reflection.

All present are silent; they look at each other; they wait anxiously the result of the emperor's meditations. At length he rises, and asks to be shown some place where he can find a few moments' shelter. He had travelled without cessation thirty leagues *en voiture*, and thirty on horseback; he was worn out with fatigue, but he seemed unconscious of exhaustion. He asked for a table and lights; he wanted to look at his maps, and give orders. A messenger is despatched to the neighbouring postmaster, a light is brought, and the emperor's face becomes visible. His features exhibit some traces of his late emotion, but no disturbance of mind—the prevailing expression is invincible energy.

The maps are spread; he examines them; he reflects, and then says—"If I had the army here, all would be set right! Alexander is going to show himself to the Parisians. He is not badly inclined; he has no desire to burn Paris; he only wishes to show himself in this great city. To-morrow he will hold a review; he will have one portion of his troops on the right of the Seine, another on the left. Some will be in Paris, some outside, and in that position, if I had my army, I would crush them all. The people would join me. They would fling every available missile on the heads of the allies. The peasants of Burgundy would finish the work. Not one of them should return to the Rhine. The greatness of France would be restored. If I had the army! But my troops will not arrive for three or four days. Ah! why did not Paris hold out some hours longer?" And as he uttered these words Napoleon walked up and down the small room, which was scarcely large enough to hold him and the few witnesses of this strange scene. In order to calm him M. de Caulaincourt said—"But, sire, the army will come, and in four days your majesty can do what you would do to-day." Napoleon, who up to this moment seemed neither to hear or understand what was said to him, suddenly raised his head and walked straight up to M. de Caulaincourt, and he, who had never appeared to admit the possibility of a revolution, exclaimed—"Ah! Caulaincourt, you do not know men. Three days—two days; you do not know what may be done in that short time. You know not all the intrigues that will be plotted against me. You know not how many there are who will abandon me. I could name them for you if you wish. Listen—the people say that I have ordered the empress and my son to leave Paris. It is true; but I cannot explain everything. The empress is a child. They would make use of her against me, and God knows what acts they would force her to commit. But let us forget these

trifles. Three days—four days; 'tis very long. However, the army will arrive, and if I am properly seconded, France may be saved." Napoleon relapsed into silence, sank into thought; he took a few rapid steps, then in a tone of inspiration he exclaimed—"Caulaincourt, I have our enemies trapped. God will deliver them up to me. I shall annihilate them in Paris; but I must gain time. You must help me to gain it." Then, intimating that he wished to be alone, he remained with M. de Caulaincourt, to whom he explained his plan, which was as follows. M. de Caulaincourt was to go to Paris to visit Alexander, by whom he would be well received. He should appeal to the recollections of this prince, seek to awaken his old sentiments, point out the dangers that threatened him in this great capital, especially when Napoleon, approaching with 60,000 men, would be joined by the 20,000 that were leaving Paris, all burning for revenge, and wishing at any time to redeem the honour of our arms. These ideas must have already presented themselves to the imagination of Alexander, but would doubtless produce still more effect when placed before his eyes by another. If in this disposition of mind an immediate offer of peace were made to him on conditions nearly the same as those of Chatillon, he would not compromise his triumph, he would lend a willing ear, he would send M. de Caulaincourt to the French headquarters. M. de Caulaincourt would go and return. Three or four days would soon pass, and then, added Napoleon, I should have the army, and all would be set right. "But, sire," replied M. de Caulaincourt, "would not that be an opportunity of negotiating seriously and submitting to events, if not to men, and to accept the Chatillon bases, or at least their principles?" "No," replied Napoleon, "it is sufficient to have hesitated an instant. No, no; the sword must decide everything. Cease to humiliate me. The dignity of France can still be saved. The chances are great, if you only gain me three or four days." Firm as M. de Caulaincourt was, he could with difficulty resist the torrent of this energy, whose impetuosity so many misfortunes had not abated. He asked that Prince Berthier should accompany him, as he knew the resources that the emperor had still at his disposal, and was himself known and esteemed by the sovereigns, and would be listened to with attention. Napoleon did not allow M. de Caulaincourt to finish. In the first place, he wanted Berthier, who alone knew how the army was distributed through the confused theatre of war; but this was not his strongest reason. "Berthier is excellent," said Napoleon, "he has great qualities, he loves me, I love him, but he is weak. You have no idea of what those intriguers who are going to set to work are capable of doing. Go without him; you are the only one whose

temperament would enable you to visit unhurt the focus of those intrigues."

After this animated conversation it was decided that Napoleon should fix himself at Fontainebleau, where he should concentrate the army, and collect his remaining resources, and that whilst he was preparing everything for a last and formidable struggle, M. de Caulaincourt should endeavour, if not to stop, at least to retard the political enterprises which the allies, together with the malcontents, were about to attempt in Paris—that three or four days would thus be gained, and by that time the longed-for moment would have arrived when Napoleon should appear at the gates of the capital; perhaps, indeed, to be defeated, but even so, to involve the coalition in his ruin. M. de Caulaincourt accepted the mission with his usual fidelity, not indeed with the intention of deceiving the allied sovereigns, for he would not wish to deceive any one, not even the enemies of his country, but in the hope of renewing relations between an intractable master and victorious Europe. He left for Paris, whilst Napoleon set out for Fontainebleau, after having ordered the troops which arrived to take up a position on the river Essonne, and establish themselves firmly there. It was behind this line that Napoleon wished to concentrate his forces. He was so animated that one might have believed him on the eve of one of his greatest victories, rather than on the morrow of one of his greatest disasters. His ardent imagination had already conceived a design which could, he thought, change the destinies of all. He was bringing with him 50,000 men, who would be joined by 15,000 or 18,000 that were leaving Paris. With what he could collect from the banks of the Seine and the Yonne he would not have less than 70,000 combatants, whom he wished to concentrate between Fontainebleau and Paris, along the Essonne, his right on the Seine, his left in the direction of Orleans, where were his wife and son. The enemy would be dispersed in Paris, divided on the two banks of the Seine; and with 70,000 soldiers, whose hearts were inflamed with honour and patriotism, Napoleon did not despair of striking terrible blows—blows that would resound through ages to come. Who could tell—perhaps in one bloody day he would restore the greatness of France. These ideas succeeded each other with the rapidity of lightning in his mind, and after sending M. de Caulaincourt to Paris, he gave his orders to General Belliard, desiring him to go to the river Essonne, and to summon the two marshals thither and fix them on the banks of the Seine, on the Orleans route. He told him that on the next day he would furnish them with artillery to replace what they had lost in the glorious and fatal battle of Paris. Having made these arrangements, he quitted M. de

Caulaincourt and Belliard, and set out for Fontainebleau with Berthier to await and collect his army there.

Whilst Napoleon proceeded thither, M. de Caulaincourt took the road to Paris, and repaired to the Hôtel de Ville, seeking the municipal authorities—the sole power that still subsisted in our deserted capital. But they had already repaired to Bondy, to make an appeal to the allied sovereigns in favour of the Parisians. The greater part of the night had passed. The Emperor Alexander had received the two prefects, and the deputation that accompanied them, in his most gracious manner. This monarch, at length master of Paris, was at the height of his wishes. His pride once satisfied, all his good qualities came into play. His most decided inclination was the desire to please, and there were none whose approbation he more desired than that of those French who had conquered him so often, and whom he in his turn had conquered, and whose applause he passionately ambitioned. His most cherished dream was to astonish this generous people by the extent of his generosity, a noble weakness if it were one.

He therefore received the two prefects and the Parisian deputation with the greatest courtesy, repeated to them what he had so often said before—that he did not war against France, but against the mad ambition of a single man; that he did not mean to impose either a government or a humiliating peace on France; but to deliver her from a despotism from which she had not suffered less than all Europe. He guaranteed the best treatment to the capital, provided the Parisians remained quiet; and he showed himself as friendly towards his guests as they desired to be towards him. He consented, without any difficulty, to confide the care of Paris to the national guard, and not to billet his soldiers on the inhabitants. He only asked for provisions, which they had, and which they promised him.

As soon as the general conversation was finished, he addressed himself individually to each member of the deputation, and again affirmed, that whilst he brought the most honourable peace to France, he would also leave her full liberty in the choice of her government. He was particularly anxious to know what had become of M. de Talleyrand, what this great man was doing, and where he then was. M. de Nesselrode, who was present at this conversation, requested M. de Laborde, one of the deputation with whom he was acquainted, to repair immediately to M. de Talleyrand to detain him at Paris, if he had not left, and to assure him that the allied sovereigns held him in the highest esteem.

Whilst the prefects were with Alexander the officers of the two armies had arranged the conditions for the evacuation of

Paris. It was agreed that at about seven in the morning the soldiers of Marshals Marmont and Mortier should deliver the barriers to the soldiers of the allied armies, after which the sovereigns would make their entrance into Paris.

Meantime, M. de Caulaincourt, not having found the Parisian authorities at the Hôtel de Ville, had repaired to the Chateau de Bondy, met the deputation returning, and after great difficulty succeeded in gaining admittance to Alexander. Alexander received him with the same cordiality as formerly, embraced him in the most affectionate manner, and explained why he had not received him at Prague; then coming to the great events of the day, he said that, free from all resentment, and only desirous of peace, he came to seek it at Paris, since he had not been able to find it at Chatillon; that he wished it to be honourable for France, but also secure for Europe, and for that reason neither he nor his allies would any longer consent to negotiate with Napoleon; that it would not be difficult to find a person with whom they could treat, as they heard on all sides that France was as weary of Napoleon as Europe itself, and that she desired nothing better than to be rid of his despotism; that besides, the allies had no idea of doing violence to this glorious France, but, on the contrary, meant to treat her with all respect, to leave her the choice of her own sovereign, and to conclude a peace with that sovereign as soon as France should have chosen him; that when they had entered Paris they would consult the most eminent persons, to whom they would apply in every difference of opinion, and that what should be decided on by the most respectable persons of the country should be adopted by the allies, and consecrated by the adhesion of Europe.

Dismayed by language so firm, and at the same time so calm and mild, M. de Caulaincourt sought to combat the opinions expressed by Alexander. He tried to make him feel the danger the allies would run if they, the representatives of social order and monarchy in Europe, in favouring revolutionary principles, should dethrone a prince so long recognised and flattered by all the powers, who had been accepted by them as an ally, and by one as a son-in-law; he dwelt on the danger of being influenced by the malcontents, who only consulted their own passions, and being thus deceived as to the true sentiments of France, who, while she condemned the continual wars of Napoleon, was still grateful for the glory and internal order she had enjoyed under his reign, and felt little inclination to exchange his powerful and glorious hand for the weak and forgotten one of the Bourbons; in a word, the danger of driving Napoleon and the army to despair, and exposing to new and fearful risks an unhoped-for triumph, a triumph that might be confirmed

that very instant, and rendered definite by an equitable and moderate peace.

These reasons appeared to have little weight with Alexander. He said that the allies, having no party interests nor private views, they would not be guided by the malcontents, but by sensible men; that the allied sovereigns had not, and could not, have any desire to overturn thrones; that they were aware of the danger of reducing Napoleon to despair, but were resolved, after having come so far, and especially as they were now so united, to pursue the struggle to the utmost, that they might not be obliged to recommence it under less favourable circumstances; that, of course, they expected that as long as Napoleon wielded a sword, he would make extraordinary exertions; but that, even should they be driven back from Paris, they would return again and again, until they should have obtained an assured peace, a peace that could not be expected from a man who had ravaged Europe from Cadiz to Moscow.

Nevertheless, although Alexander affected not to fear any final act of desperation on the part of Napoleon, it was evident that he was interiorly disturbed by the apprehension, and that it would be an argument of great weight in the negotiations that were to follow. As to those resolutions which appeared so irrevocable on the part of the allies, M. de Caulaincourt asked the czar whether the Emperor of Austria had no regard for family ties, and if he had brought his soldiers so far that he might have the honour of dethroning his daughter; that if that were the case, he could no longer reproach the French people with putting an archduchess to death when he was come himself to dethrone another. "The Emperor of Austria," replied Alexander, "has felt much difficulty in coming to a determination; but since you refused the armistice of Lusigny, which he had devised to bring about an accommodation, he is as firmly convinced as we, that it would be impossible to treat with his son-in-law, and that a treaty of peace, to be durable, must be signed by some other than he.

To this declaration Alexander joined fresh assurances of friendship for M. de Caulaincourt, asked him to come to see him again in the course of the day, promising to receive him at any hour, but at the same time made him promise to observe a diplomatic silence in Paris. He then left him, for the hour of triumph approached, and his vanity rendered him impatient. His desire was not to burn Paris, but to enter there in triumph.

On Thursday, March 31, 1814—day of sorrow not to be forgotten—the allied sovereigns set out between ten and eleven in the morning to make their triumphal entry into Paris. The Emperor Alexander had assumed, and was allowed by the other sovereigns to play, the chief part. The King of Prussia yielded

it to him most willingly, too happy in the success of the allied arms, a success of which his distrust of fate made him doubt until the last moment. The Emperor Francis and M. de Metternich, separated from the headquarters of the allies by the battle of Arcis-sur-Aube, had retired to Dijon, and were still ignorant of the taking of Paris. Prince Schwarzenberg possessed sufficient authority and knowledge of their intentions to represent them during these important transactions. Lord Castlereagh, minister of a government where everything must be explained to the nation, was gone to lay before Parliament the motives of the treaty of Chaumont. There was therefore nobody to dispute with the czar a position which he soon assumed openly as well as filled in reality.

Alexander, having round his arm a white scarf, which he had worn as a distinctive mark on the field of battle, crossed the Faubourg St. Martin on horseback, accompanied by the King of Prussia on his right, and Prince Schwarzenberg on his left, followed by a brilliant staff, and escorted by 50,000 chosen soldiers, marching in perfect order. A proclamation of the two prefects, announcing the benevolent intentions of the allied monarchs, had warned the Parisians of the solemn and sad event which was about to cast a gloom over their city. It would be difficult to describe the feelings of the Parisians under the influence of contradictory emotions. The people of Paris, always so sensitive of the honour of the French arms, irritated at not receiving the muskets they had demanded, and suspecting treason where there was only weakness, bore with an ill-concealed aversion the presence of the foreign soldiers. The bourgeoisie, more enlightened, though not less patriotic, appreciating the causes and consequences of events, were divided between horror of the invasion, and satisfaction at seeing an end to despotism and war. The ancient French nobility, forgetting the glory of their country, which was once so dear to them, in their hatred of the Revolution, were so intoxicated with joy at the fall of Napoleon, that it prevented them from feeling in its full extent the disaster that had befallen their native land. Some of them, anxious to effect in Paris a change like that produced in Bordeaux, traversed the Faubourg St. Germain, the Place de la Concorde, and the Boulevard, waving a white flag, and crying "Vive le Roi," a cry that found no echo, but often provoked evident disapprobation. Calmly and sadly the national guards performed their duty, ready to maintain order, which indeed nobody seemed inclined to disturb.

Such was the aspect of Paris. As the allied sovereigns pursued their route through a dense and silent crowd, across the Faubourg St. Martin to the Boulevard, they encountered at first only mournful and sometimes threatening countenances.

Beyond that, not an insult, not an acclamation, signalised their slow and solemn march. As they arrived at the Boulevard, and approached the principal quarters of the capital, the countenances began to change with the sentiments of the people; some exclamations were heard that seemed to indicate that the generous intentions of Alexander were appreciated. He replied with evident sensibility. His repeated salutations to the people, and the order observed by his soldiers, soon produced more friendly manifestations. At last the group of royalists appeared, who since morning had been traversing Paris with a white banner, and enthusiastic cries of "Long live Louis the Eighteenth! long live Alexander! long live William!" burst on the ears of the sovereigns, and caused them evident satisfaction. To the violent cries of this group were soon joined those of some elegantly dressed women, who waved their white handkerchiefs, and saluted the foreign monarchs with the passionate vivacity of their sex: sad spectacle, that we must deplore, but cannot wonder at, for it is the same that in every age and every country a divided people presents. Party triumphs stifle every feeling of patriotic sorrow that the woes of country ought to awaken.

These last manifestations reassured the allied monarchs, whom the cold ill-will testified by the populace in the Faubourg St. Martin and the Boulevard St. Denis had alarmed at first, not indeed for their personal safety, but for the success of their designs. They proceeded without pause to the Champs Elysées to review their soldiers. This great military spectacle filled up the hours of the day, which were passed by their ministers in attending to more serious and pressing cares. It was of urgent necessity to address this city of Paris, so much dreaded even when conquered; to tell the people that the allies were come neither to conquer, nor to oppress, nor to humble France—that they brought peace, which an intractable chief would not accept; and as to the form of their government, they were free to choose whatever they pleased. But in order to arrange this harangue, and to know to whom it should be addressed, it was necessary to concert with some persons of repute; therefore, during the review in the Champs Elysées, M. de Nesselrode had gone to one whom public opinion seemed unanimously to point out—in a word, to M. de Talleyrand. He found him in his celebrated hotel in the Rue St. Florentin, awaiting the steps which might be so easily foreseen, and asked him, in the name of the allied monarchs, what government they ought to give to France, assuring him, at the same time, that they had more confidence in his judgment than in that of any other man in the empire. M. de Talleyrand, who had long known and appreciated this skilful diplomatist

now deputed to wait on him, received him most warmly, and said that it was indeed true that the imperial government had lost all favour in the minds of the people; that the régime of perpetual warfare inspired as much horror in 1814 as the guillotine had in 1800; and that nothing would be easier than to bring about a revolution, provided the allies treated France with the regard due to so great a country, and proved to her, by deeds as well as by words, that they desired rather to be liberators than conquerors—on such generous terms, it was easy to come to an understanding. M. de Nesselrode repeated the assurances which he had been commissioned to lavish, and the two diplomatists were commencing to discuss the grave subjects connected with the affair, when a singular message was brought to M. de Nesselrode from the Emperor Alexander.

Through a refinement of modesty, Alexander did not wish to take up his residence in the Tuileries, but in the Elysée, and during the review a note was given him, saying that the Elysée was undermined. This note he sent to M. de Nesselrode, in order that he might inquire if there were any truth in the information. M. de Nesselrode communicated this message to M. de Talleyrand, who smiled at the childishness of the warning, but at the same time courteously offered to place his mansion at the Emperor Alexander's disposal, where he would have no danger to fear, and which had been long conducted in a princely style. M. de Nesselrode eagerly seized the offer, as an opportunity of testifying a high esteem for a person of whom the allies had great need, whilst it would at the same time augment M. de Talleyrand's influence, and facilitate in many ways the work in hand.

The Duke de Dalberg, the Abbé de Pradt, Baron Louis, and a number of other persons who had been for a long time either the confidants or the visitors of M. de Talleyrand, were assembled at his house to talk over the wonderful events which were about to be accomplished. There his court was prepared to receive the Emperor Alexander, when, having reviewed his troops, he should betake himself to the hotel in the Rue St. Florentin. The Emperor Alexander, alighting from his horse on the Place de la Concorde, repaired on foot to the house of the great imperial dignitary, to whom he presented his hand with that courtesy which seduced those who did not know how much finesse was concealed beneath the charm of his manner. He then traversed the apartments which were already filled with an eager crowd, where the new royalists, whose numbers visibly increased, were presented to him, and having lavished the most flattering attention on everybody, he retired with M. de Talleyrand to consult concerning the resolutions which were to be adopted. The King of Prussia and Prince Schwar-

zenberg were immediately summoned to this conference, to which M. de Talleyrand asked permission to introduce his true and only accomplice, the Duke de Dalberg, who, more enterprising than he, had ventured to send an emissary to the allied camp. No sooner were these eminent persons met than they commenced to discuss the business for which they had assembled—that of giving a government to France.

Alexander, who had already acquired the habit, strengthened by daily practice, of opening and closing the deliberations, commenced by repeating what he had said to everybody—that his allies were not come to France to effect a revolution, but to seek peace; that they would have concluded it at Chatillon if Napoleon had agreed, but that, having met with nothing but refusals at Chatillon, and being obliged to come and seek peace within the very walls of Paris, they were willing to conclude it with those who sincerely desired it; that it was not their part to name who should represent France under these circumstances, or to decide as to its form of government; that they did not mean to prescribe any person; that they would not even have taken it upon them to exclude Napoleon himself, if he had not prevented his admission by peremptorily refusing the conditions on which the safety of Europe depended; but Napoleon, being now excluded, they were prepared to admit any person whom the French nation would seem to desire, the Regent Marie Louise, Prince Bernadotte, the Republic itself, or the Bourbons. They were ready to admit whomsoever the French people might desire; but, both for the interest of Europe and of France herself, the French ought to choose a government strong enough to make themselves respected, particularly when succeeding the powerful hand of Napoleon, as it would be well to avoid a repetition of the work they were now about to accomplish.

Alexander did not deny that though the allied monarchs felt a natural preference for the Bourbons, they feared that those princes, being now strangers in France, and unacquainted with the people, might be unequal to governing the country; neither did they hope to form a solid government with a woman and child, such as Marie Louise and the King of Rome, and this was the decided opinion of the Emperor of Austria; that, for his part, when considering what would be the best government to give to France, he had sometimes thought of Prince Bernadotte, but that, not being supported in this opinion, he would not insist on it, and that in this state of indecision it would be easy to bend the opinion of the sovereigns to the desires of France, who alone had a right to be consulted here; that the allies had but one interest and made but one claim, which was to secure a certain peace, and by offering one that was honourable,

such as was due to a nation covered with glory, a nation against whom the allies felt no resentment for their own injuries, knowing well that she had been as much oppressed as the rest of Europe by the detested yoke that had just been broken.

It was M. de Talleyrand alone who was expected to reply to this speech, so mild, flattering, and insinuating. These questions were particularly addressed to him, as the most esteemed of those to whom they could be propounded. Generally speaking, M. de Talleyrand was not anxious to express his opinion, and willingly gave precedence to more eager speakers; but he was capable of deciding promptly when necessary. M. de Talleyrand possessed in the highest degree the faculty of discerning the exact state of affairs; he knew well what suited each person, and possessed the art of clothing his opinions in a piquant or sententious guise, which gave them all the value of a *bon mot*, or of an aphorism. He saw clearly that as Napoleon owed his throne to his military victories, that it was by such victories alone he could retain it; that to him defeat was equivalent to dethronement; he saw that a republic could not be proposed to a generation that had witnessed the horrors of 1793, and that as monarchy was the only suitable government, the Bourbon was the only acceptable dynasty, for it would not be possible to create at will, and by artificial means, the conditions that qualify a family for the throne. Genius, or chance, born of revolution, might, for a moment, raise a man to the highest position, and of this there was a living proof; but this phenomenon once passed away, the people would quickly resume opinions consecrated by time and long-formed national habits.

Safe from imperial vengeance, M. de Talleyrand slowly and clearly pronounced the truth upon this subject, and declared that Napoleon was no longer suitable to France. France, to which, indeed, he had rendered great services, though unfortunately at a very high price, saw in him, as did all Europe, the personification of war, whilst she was desirous of peace. Napoleon was consequently the very antithesis of what the present generation desired. It could not be expected that he would sign a treaty of peace. In fact, any peace, even on the most honourable terms—such as France might accept, and Europe, in her wisdom, grant—would be certain to fall short of Napoleon's pretensions; nor could he subscribe it without demeaning himself, and consequently, with the intention of breaking it. They must now abandon all idea of Napoleon, since he was incompatible with peace, for which the whole world called, and it would be seen, in leaving free scope to public opinion, still repressed, that this was the universal belief. And if Napoleon himself was not fit, neither were his wife and son.

Who could seriously believe that he would not be the moving spring of a government carried on in the names of Marie Louise and the King of Rome, and really rule in their name? Nobody. It would still be Napoleon, with all his disadvantages added to those of dissimulation. It was consequently necessary to renounce such a combination; and since the august prince, who had given his daughter to Napoleon, was willing to make a sacrifice for Europe, that sacrifice ought to be accepted in thanking the Emperor of Austria for having so well comprehended the difficulties of the position. As to the proposition of choosing Prince Bernadotte, who was become heir to the throne of Sweden, it required still less consideration. France, after being governed by a soldier of genius, would never brook the rule of a mediocre soldier, one, too, who was covered with the blood of her sons. There, then, only remained the Bourbons. Certainly France, that had once known them well, knew little of them now, and even entertained certain prepossessions against them. But she would renew her acquaintance, and receive them willingly, if they brought back, not the prejudices which had been already the ruin of their house, but the healthy ideas of the age. M. de Talleyrand added that it would be necessary to bind them by wise laws, and reconcile them with the army by placing about them the most distinguished military men; that with tact, precaution, and assiduity, all this might be accomplished; in fact, it should be made possible, for it was necessary; that after so much national commotion, the most crying public want was the re-establishment of the social edifice on a steady basis, which only seemed possible when the throne of France should be restored to its old possessors. Summing up his opinion in a few words, M. de Talleyrand said—"The Republic is an impossibility; the regency and Bernadotte are an intrigue; the Bourbons alone are a principle."

Such language was sure to please the allied sovereigns, and would have found still warmer applauses amongst them, if the Emperor Francis, the true representative of old Europe, if Lord Castlereagh, the head of the Tory party, had been present. However, the rare good sense of King William made him desire that all that had just been said should be true. Alexander, without desiring it so much, was still willing to admit it, provided that the restoration of the Bourbons might be a means of pacifying France without humbling her—of pleasing, after having conquered her. M. de Talleyrand, who had expressed his opinion clearly and firmly, but without vehemence, wishing to give it the support of an eloquence more lively and warmer than his, proposed to the allies and their ministers, assembled in his drawing-room, to introduce some Frenchmen who, by their position, intelligence, or official rank, deserved to be heard.

He called in the Abbé de Pradt, Archbishop of Mechlin, who had lately been ambassador at Warsaw; Baron Louis, a skilful financier, and employed by Napoleon on several important occasions; and General Dessoles, formerly head of Moreau's staff, and one of the most esteemed men in the army.

The interview then lost its character of a *tête-à-tête*. The conversation became animated, and sometimes confused from its very animation. The Abbé de Pradt with his petulant language, Baron Louis with his firmness, and General Dessoles with his solid reason, affirmed, each in his own manner, that there was an end to Napoleon's rule, that nobody any longer desired a madman who was ready to sacrifice France and Europe to his sanguinary chimeras, that his wife and son would be only he under another name, that Bernadotte would be considered an insult, and that as a monarchy was desired, the Bourbons alone could be thought of; that it was true they were not thought of yet, but nobody had had time to think, but that if their names were once openly spoken, everybody would see that they were the only suitable princes, and that by providing against their prejudices by good laws, they would have all the advantages without the inconveniences that their name afforded.

Nobody was more influenced than Alexander by the conclusiveness of this advice. "Since this is your unanimous opinion," said he, "it is not for us to oppose it." Then looking at his allies, who signified their approbation by an inclination of the head, especially Prince Schwarzenberg, who had visibly approved what had been said against the regency of Marie Louise, he declared himself ready to accept the Bourbons; "For," said he, "it is not the representatives of the old European monarchies that could object to the restoration of this ancient family." This principle once admitted, it was next to be considered how the deposition of Napoleon was to be assured, and what government should be instituted to reconcile Europe to France, and France to herself. M. de Talleyrand, and those who composed his extempore council, were of opinion that they ought to make use of the Senate, whom they expected to find ready to overthrow a ruler they had so long flattered, and hated while they flattered. But in order to inspire this body with sufficient courage to come to a decision, it was necessary that Napoleon should appear irrevocably condemned. Without this certainty the same timidity which had kept the senators silent before Napoleon would still keep them silent in presence of his shadow. To remove this difficulty the first and simplest way was to declare that the allied sovereigns—assembled at Paris, and prepared to grant the most honourable peace to France—had determined not to treat with Napoleon, with whom they believed it

impossible to conclude a sincere and durable peace. Although this was a very serious engagement to enter into, they could and they did not hesitate, as it was the only means to induce a burst of public opinion with regard to Napoleon. The declaration was therefore adopted. However, for those who desired the immediate restoration of the Bourbons, it was not sufficient to say that the allies would not treat with Napoleon. It would be necessary to add, nor with any member of his family; for, if any chance were left for his son, timid persons would hold back, and it was those whom it was important to influence at this moment. This necessary addition was made on the proposition of Abbé de Pradt, and the following declaration, signed by Alexander in the name of his allies, was immediately placarded on the walls of Paris:—

"The armies of the allied powers occupy the capital of France. The allied sovereigns are willing to promote the wishes of the French nation.

"They declare—

"That if the conditions of peace necessarily involved the strongest guarantees when it was a question of restraining the ambition of Bonaparte, they need be less stringent when France herself, by again adopting the rule of a moderate government, will give the best pledge of peace.

"Wherefore the allies proclaim—

"That they will not treat with Napoleon, nor with any member of his family.

"That they respect the integrity of ancient France, such as it existed under her 'legitimate kings;' that they even do more, because they still maintain the principle that for the welfare of Europe, France ought to be great and powerful.

"The allied sovereigns will recognise and guarantee whatever constitution the French nation will choose. They therefore invite the Senate to appoint a provisional government to discharge the functions of the executive, and prepare a suitable constitution for the French people.

"The intentions that I here express are shared with me by all the allied powers.

"ALEXANDER.

"COUNT DE NESSELRODE, *Secretary of State.*

"Three o'clock p.m. PARIS, *March* 31, 1814."

It was decided that M. de Talleyrand and his co-operators, authorised by this declaration, should consult with the members of the Senate, and prevail on them to appoint a provisional government; they would afterwards consider the mode of formally and definitely pronouncing the deposition of Napoleon.

After this first act the sovereigns separated. Alexander remained at M. de Talleyrand's; the King of Prussia went to the hotel of Prince Eugène, which has since become the Prussian embassy. Orders were given that the allied troops should not be billeted on the inhabitants, but that, furnished with provisions, they should bivouac in the principal places of the capital, especially in the Champs Elysées. General Sacken was appointed governor of Paris. The editors of the different journals were either changed or required to speak according to the spirit of the new revolution. The telegraph, such as it then was, announced the great events which had been transacted in the capital, together with the reiterated assurances of the generous intentions of the allies. Royalists, old and new, who during the day had besieged the Hôtel Talleyrand, dispersed through the capital, in order to propagate the hope, and almost the certainty, of the restoration of the Bourbons. Those who during the morning had borne a white banner through the streets of Paris, having assembled tumultuously, proposed to address the foreign sovereigns, and demand the immediate proclamation of the Bourbons. They considered the declaration that the allies would not treat with Napoleon was indeed something gained, but yet not sufficient; they should also proclaim that they would treat with none but the Bourbons, the only legitimate sovereigns of France. After a warm and disorderly deliberation, they separated, having agreed on this one point, that a deputation should be sent to Alexander, to announce to him the formal wishes of the royalists. Effectively this deputation sought Alexander, first at the Elysée, then at the hotel in the Rue St. Florentin, but was not received by that prince, but by M. de Nesselrode, who, confining himself within the bounds of a suitable reserve, said that Europe, through her representatives at Paris, meant to be guided altogether by the wishes of France; and if these wishes were, as everything seemed to indicate, favourable to the Bourbons, the allied sovereigns would be happy to assist in their restoration, and to contribute to it by their full consent.

Thus was the first act of the revolution accomplished. The sovereigns had entered Paris, had been favourably received by the disarmed populace, whom they were anxious to flatter; they had consulted some persons of importance, and by their advice had declared they would no longer treat with Napoleon, but were ready to treat advantageously with any government agreeable to the French nation. This was sufficient to induce public opinion, weary of the rule of a soldier, who never desired repose for himself, and would never allow it to others, to declare in favour of the only dynasty which now presented itself to the public mind, except indeed that which had been raised

up by victory, and which victory had just overthrown. A moment's hesitation was necessarily caused by an event so sudden, and after twenty years' absence of the Bourbons; but hours were now about to accomplish what in other times might not have been brought about in months and years.

The same evening and the following morning all those restless spirits who fling themselves into the torrent of revolutions—some to seek gain, others for the sake of the excitement—came and went without ceasing from M. de Talleyrand's to those persons, especially the senators, whose assistance was necessary. No great resistance was to be dreaded on any side, for every one considered Napoleon's defeat equivalent to his dethronement. It is true that the people of Paris felt some regret for the brilliant warrior who had long dazzled their imaginations, and who but a few days before had still appeared as the defender of their walls; but for all France, with the exception of the inhabitants of a few large towns, and of the peasantry whose huts had been ravaged, peace, the natural consequence of Napoleon's fall, was a great relief. Besides, there was a general desire for change amongst those who more directly guided events. The old revolutionists, without reflecting that it was the Bourbons that would succeed Napoleon, rejoiced at the prospect of being revenged on the author of the 18th Brumaire. Sensible persons saw in present events only the predicted consequence of unlimited power, and of the mad rashness which they had so often deplored. Men, entirely occupied by their own interests, and anxious to court fortune, not seeing her beside Napoleon, turned their attention elsewhere. Amid feelings so unanimous, it was not to be feared that the Senate would blush for, or persevere in, its long submission. In general, persons feel indignant against those by whom a long obedience has been imposed, and far from being a shackle to modesty, the sense of imposed subjection serves as a pretext for ingratitude.

Of this the faithful and unfortunate Duke de Vicence was fully convinced during this day (31st March) and the following night, for after leaving Alexander, he had called on the many persons who, under different titles, had served the imperial government, and who could be of assistance in this extremity. He believed that by claiming their promised faith, or at least their gratitude, for every one of these men owed his fortune to Napoleon, he would succeed in strengthening the fidelity of those who began to waver, and that if the allied sovereigns, who were so desirous not to offend public opinion, should find it still, though ever so little, in favour of Napoleon, they would stop, and instead of a revolution, content themselves with making peace, a work for which M. de Caulaincourt was now

prepared. He had secretly determined to violate his instructions, even should his acts be disowned at Fontainebleau, and sign the Chatillon bases at Paris. But his unceasing visits during four and twenty hours had brought him only surprise, indignation, and profound contempt for men whom he did not know sufficiently to expect what he now experienced. Upright, straightforward, and intellectual, M. de Caulaincourt did not possess that profound knowledge of men which forbids anger by excluding surprise. He passed two days in astonishment and anger. His first visit was to the hotel in the Rue St. Florentin; but here he felt no surprise, for, knowing as he did M. de Talleyrand's just causes of complaint, he considered his conduct quite natural. He only hoped to be able to induce him to choose another course. "It is too late," said the great actor in the scene of the day; "all that can be now done for Napoleon is to secure him a distant retreat. He is a madman, who has lost everything, and deservedly lost, and who should no longer be taken into consideration. Think of yourself, and look to your own interests. Your own honourable reputation and the friendship of the Emperor Alexander will assure you a position under any government. Consider your own interests, and forget a master who is weary of your sincerity." M. de Caulaincourt, who expected such language from M. de Talleyrand, passing over what concerned himself, and exercising the privilege of an old friend, endeavoured to awaken the favour with which M. de Talleyrand was believed to regard the regency of Marie Louise, under which he might be the first personage in the State. "It is too late," repeated the Prince de Benevento; "I wished to save Marie Louise and her son by keeping them in Paris, but a letter from that man whose destiny is to destroy everybody obliged them to leave for Blois, and caused the void that we are now seeking to fill up. Cease your regrets; all is at an end for Napoleon and his friends. Think of your children, and let us save France by the only means we can now employ." M. de Caulaincourt, seeing that M. de Talleyrand was irrevocably engaged to the cause of the Bourbons, lost all hope of influencing him. As M. de Caulaincourt left the cabinet of M. de Talleyrand, he passed a group composed of officials of the empire, amongst whom the Abbé de Pradt, as was his wont, was speaking without the least reserve. M. de Caulaincourt, who recalled to mind the long flatteries of the Bishop of Mechlin, could not restrain his anger, and walking directly towards him, left him no resource but the staircase of the Hôtel St. Florentin. The others surrounded M. de Caulaincourt and tried to calm him, assuring him that his honourable fidelity misled him, and that he ought now to open his eyes to the truth. "But why not open them before?" cried M.

de Caulaincourt, addressing himself to these men, who had been once such warm partisans of the empire; "why not open them before? If you had supported me six months ago, we should have stopped on the brink of the abyss the man that you now call a fool, a madman, and an intractable tyrant." To this they only replied by turning away their heads and saying that all was at an end for Napoleon. Still in despair, M. de Caulaincourt hastened to visit several of the senators; but he found few doors that were not closed at his name, once so honoured and so well received. Some were from home, others pretended to be; some, however, taken by surprise, received him. Amongst these a few appeared embarrassed, surprised, and sought to conceal with profound sighs their evident determination to do anything that should be asked of them. Others, more daring, declared in a loud voice that it was time to think of France, that had been too long forgotten, too long sacrificed to a man who had seriously compromised the country, and who would cause its destruction if it were not torn from his grasp. "Sacrificed by whom?" said M. de Caulaincourt with passion, "if not by those who now see for the first time that the hero, the god of yesterday, is only a madman and a despot, who must be hurled from the throne for the safety of France." But these reflections of the honest Duke de Vicence, however just, could not alter anything, and he saw clearly that Napoleon's cause was lost, and that the utmost that could be done would be perhaps to save the son in abandoning the father; but there was scarcely time even for that, so fearfully rapid was the succession of events. Besides, although indignant at what he saw, he felt that what he heard was the truth, though it ill became the lips that pronounced it, and as though he were the culprit against whom these just reproaches were directed from every side, he withdrew silent and dejected. Despairing of the Senate, he determined to appeal to Alexander and Prince Schwarzenberg, that he might save something from this great wreck.

The success denied to M. de Caulaincourt with the senators was easily obtained by M. de Talleyrand: some affecting indignation, others sighing, but all trying to find favour with the man who held the future in his hands, seemed prepared to yield a full consent to whatever might be proposed to them. More character was shown by those who, disciples of M. de Sieyès, had formed an inactive but severe opposition in the Senate. These were ready to undertake everything against Napoleon, and their dignity was uncompromised, for they had never flattered him; but they were not as ready as their colleagues to accept whatever conditions might be imposed. They asked whether they were to be led, like prisoners of war, to the feet of the Bourbons; and if, in recalling this family, there was

to be no guarantee for the principles of the French Revolution, and the restoration of that liberty which had been so long immolated to the author of the 18th Brumaire. They were assured that the Bishop of Autun, independent of his clear-sightedness, had a particular interest in taking precautions against the Bourbons, and that as soon as Napoleon should be set aside by the votes of the Senate, he would immediately occupy himself in framing a constitution suited to the wants and lights of the age.

This being understood, M. de Talleyrand, as grand dignitary and vice-president of the Senate, took the resolution of convoking this body for the 1st of April, the day following the entrance of the allied armies, in order to supply the want of a governing authority. Although many doors were knocked at and many senators visited, the number of those who had quitted the capital with Marie Louise, or those whose offices kept them near Napoleon, and above all, the number of the intimidated, was so great, that of 440 scarcely 70 could be assembled. At three o'clock they took their seats and waited with resignation to hear what should be proposed to them. M. de Talleyrand told them, in an ill-written speech, the production of the Abbé de Pradt, that they were called on to aid a forsaken people (an expression expressly chosen, that the resolution about to be taken might be based on the departure of the regent), and to provide for that indispensable want of every society—a government; that they were consequently invited to form a provisional government which might assume the rejected reins of authority. All listened in profound silence to this discourse, which was pronounced with M. de Talleyrand's usual nonchalance, and none made an objection; but the members of the Liberal opposition demanded immediately that the provisional government should not alone take upon it the administration of the State, but that it should also frame a constitution which would consecrate the principles of the French Revolution; and one suborned to allure his colleagues, hastened to add that the Senate and the Legislative Body should occupy the place of the great political bodies in the future constitution. These propositions were reciprocally accorded, and it was decided that the government which they were about to appoint, after having assumed the power, should immediately proceed to frame a constitution.

This being decided, they were next to compose this so-called provisional government. It is unnecessary to mention that those who were to be chosen, and their number, had been already decided at M. de Talleyrand's. As three would not suffice for the many wants of the time, five were chosen, and those from amongst the most submissive friends of M. de Talleyrand, and who, at the same time, would be useful from

their connections with the different parties. Therefore four other persons were joined with M. de Talleyrand, the appointed head of the new government. The first was the Duke de Dalberg, a man little known in France, but the oldest, the most active, and the most skilful operator in the deep intrigue which now saw the light; he was, besides, intimately connected with the foreign princes and ministers, who were the necessary support of the new revolution. This man being chosen for the foreign diplomacy, another was to be selected for the army. The choice fell upon the old Beurnonville, an officer in the early times of the Revolution, a man of moderate abilities, good-natured and yielding, who, a short while since, was mourning over the misfortunes of Napoleon, with M. de Lavallette, and was now inveighing against his faults in the Hôtel Talleyrand. He was intimately connected with the greater number of the military malcontents. It was necessary to meet as far as possible the opinions of the different parties, without, however, going beyond the society of M. de Talleyrand, where all were essentially moderate. M. de Jaucourt was selected—an honest man, an old Constituant, mild, enlightened, liberal; one who had belonged to the minority of the nobility, and happily represented those who desired to unite the Bourbons and liberty. But that royalty, the ruling influence of the moment, might not be forgotten, the Abbé de Montesquiou was appointed. He had been one of the presidents of the *Assemblée Constituante*, and under the empire had been the secret correspondent of Louis XVIII., a churchman, and a man of the world, who no longer officiated as a priest, frequented society, and who, while he retained more than one political prejudice, affected to have no religious prepossession; well informed, witty, independent, but haughty and irritable, chosen now as an accessory, but destined to become soon the principal person, because, besides to the advantage of representing a power that was hourly gaining importance, he joined that of having the most decided opinions of any member of the new government.

As we have said, these men had been previously fixed on at M. de Talleyrand's. The Senate, divided into groups, told each other who had been selected, and confirmed the choice by their votes, without dreaming of rejecting a single name of those that had been presented to them. These resolutions being adopted, M. de Talleyrand, leaving the Senate to put them into official form, returned to his hotel, where he found the numerous courtiers of his new grandeur, who were convinced that he would bring back the Bourbons, and govern them on their return.

The men thus chosen could constitute a nominal government, reflecting the various opinions of the day, but not an effective

government capable of administering public affairs. For this a ministry should be appointed. No sooner had M. de Talleyrand returned from the Luxembourg than he assembled his colleagues, and turned his attention to the choice of ministers. Two were of vital importance—the ministers of war and finance, for money must be got, and the army detached from Napoleon. Baron Louis was chosen minister of finance, a choice for which France had eternal cause of thanksgiving—a man of earnest and vigorous mind, who understood better than any one of his time the power of credit, that power which could alone close the wounds of war, and replace the creative genius of Napoleon. In appointing General Dupont (the unfortunate victim of Baylen) minister of war, they yielded too much to the feelings of the time, and made an appointment which had all the character of a reaction. Of late, attention had been directed to the brilliant victories of General Dupont; in 1805 and 1806 his misfortunes had been pitied, and whilst Napoleon was blamed in secret and flattered in public, it was said privately that General Dupont was the victim chosen to deceive public opinion as to the faults of the Spanish war. They erred in thinking that this choice, which was an accusation against Napoleon, and reparation to the army, would please the latter, whilst, on the contrary, it only irritated the military. M. de Talleyrand, one of General Dupont's judges, summoned him from his prison at Dreux. M. de Beugnot, another who held office under the empire, was appointed minister of the home department—a man of great intelligence, who had distinguished himself lately by piquant epigrams against the empire. The legal department was confided to M. Henrion de Pansey, a liberal and respectable magistrate; the naval to a disgraced councillor of State, the estimable and hard-working M. Malouet; foreign affairs to M. de Laforest, a learned diplomatist, unconnected with any party, and possessing the usual moderation of his profession. The civil department, under the form of general direction, was confided to an employé of this department, M. Anglis, a secret friend of the Bourbons; and the post office to M. de Bourrienne, an enemy of Napoleon, and formerly his secretary, who had been removed from the cabinet for reasons unconnected with politics.

To these appointments, some of which were excellent and others indifferent or unsatisfactory, one most fortunate addition was made. The national guard, very well constituted, had behaved honourably and firmly, and deserved to be treated with consideration. It received a worthy commander, General Dessoles, formerly head of Moreau's staff, a man of decided character, of clear and cultivated intellect, who had formerly been a republican, but was now a partisan of constitutional

monarchy, and united in his person a civil and military character, as became the chief of a troop called "The Citizen Militia."

These persons, like the government which appointed them, received only provisional titles. They were called "commissioners delegated for the administration of justice, war, of the interior, &c." They were ordered to repair immediately to their posts, and take possession of their different offices as quickly and as completely as possible. Here was now a government to refer to, with which the sovereigns could treat, and which they were about to employ to tear from Napoleon whatever civil or military power he still possessed in France.

Instituting this provisional government was declaring that Napoleon had ceased to exist, and this was an important step. They would not have ventured to take it without the support of 200,000 foreign bayonets in Paris. This, however, was not sufficient for the few but zealous royalists that were at work in the capital, and who, if they were deficient in numbers, had with them all the weight of present circumstances. They would have the Bourbons proclaimed at once; they beset M. de Talleyrand and M. de Montesquiou to induce them to take a decided step, and declare without delay that Louis XVIII. was the only legitimate sovereign of France, and that his reign commenced at the death of the unfortunate Louis XVII. Such expeditious work did not suit either the calculations of M. de Talleyrand, who did not desire the unconditional return of the Bourbons, nor his temperament, which never allowed him to hurry, nor his prudence, which saw the necessity for many intermediate steps. To these impatient spirits he opposed his customary weapons—nonchalance and disdain; he considered himself justified in saying, what was true for some time at least—that he alone was to regulate public affairs.

Defeated on this side, the ardent royalists betook themselves to the Municipal Council of Paris and the staff of the national guard. Both counted in their numbers large landed proprietors, rich merchants, and distinguished members of the liberal professions. It was to be expected that they would find partisans of royalty amongst them. Such were found in the Municipal Council, and M. Bellart, an advocate of talent, whose intellect was more brilliant than profound, drew up an address to the Parisians, in which he enumerated in virulent language what party spirit then designated the crimes of Napoleon, but what history, with greater justice, will call his errors, errors of which some were very culpable and almost all irreparable. At the end of this long enumeration M. de Bellart proposed the deposition of Napoleon, adding resolutely that France could only be saved by throwing herself into the arms of the legitimate

dynasty, and that the members of the Municipal Council, regardless of all danger, considered it a duty to proclaim this truth to their fellow-citizens. This address was unanimously adopted. This deliberation was held in the presence of the prefect, M. de Chabrol, who owed his sudden elevation to Napoleon, having been transferred at once from the prefecture of Montenotte to that of the Seine. He could have opposed this address, but he thought he fulfilled his duty by declaring that his convictions were conformable to the proposed address, but that his gratitude prevented him from signing it. This address, signed by all the members of the council that were present, was posted on the walls of Paris on the evening of the 1st April, at the very time that the Senate was framing the provisional government. The royalists hastened the same hour to the Hôtel St. Florentin to get permission from the provisional government to insert the address in the *Moniteur*. M. de Talleyrand was displeased at this impatience, which, in his opinion, would spoil everything. His colleagues, with the exception of M. de Montesquiou, were of the same opinion, and contented themselves with allowing it to be posted in the streets of the capital, but refused its insertion in the *Moniteur*.

The royalists were not so successful with the staff of the national guard. General Dessoles, the lately appointed chief, had unhesitatingly taken the side of the Bourbons, wishing, however, that they should be restrained by a wise constitution, and joined in the efforts made to deck the national guard again with the white cockade. But they were stopped by the resistance met with, particularly from M. Allent, head of the staff, a man known and esteemed during thirty years as the most enlightened member of the *Conseil d'Etat*.

There existed a great deal of patriotism in the guard, united with much intelligence, prudence, love of order, and above all, great disapproval of the faults of Napoleon. The men of the guard blushed to see the enemy in the bosom of the capital; some of them had fought at the barriers, and so would all, had they been provided with arms, and if the regent had not abandoned them, they would have rivalled the populace in defending Paris. Without blaming those who sought to replace an impracticable and insupportable government, they saw with repugnance that this work was half accomplished by foreigners, and it needed much precaution in leading them, step by step, to the deposition of Napoleon and the recall of the Bourbons. After a few trials the royalists perceived they should go to work slowly, and that there was danger of wounding honest, sincere, and still warm feelings.

This was a lesson to the impatient, and fresh strength to sensible persons like M. de Talleyrand, who did not wish to

move too fast. One of the most ardent, and at this moment one of the most useful members of the royalist party, had just arrived in Paris. We mean M. de Vitrolles, sent, as has been seen, to the camp of the allied sovereigns, and admitted to an audience after the rupture of the Congress at Chatillon, and then sent to Lorraine to give some good advice to the Count d'Artois, and prepare him for the part for which Providence seemed to destine him. He was not perhaps the best person to counsel prudence to the prince, but he was a man of intelligence, and long acquainted with MM. de Talleyrand and de Dalberg, and was convinced that it would be impossible to succeed except united with them, and equally impossible to govern without them. This was the truth as far as concerned persons, if not with reference to things; but the one would lead to the other. When M. de Vitrolles arrived at Nancy he had great difficulty in finding the prince, who was still obliged to conceal himself, and whom he filled with joy when he told him of the late resolutions of the allies, and the reasons there were for hoping for an approaching change in the affairs of France. The account of the battle of the 30th March had changed this hope into certainty. The prince, whom joy had rendered more willing to hear and to grant anything, made no objection to what was proposed. It appeared to him quite natural to treat the army well, and to surround himself with men who had become illustrious and remained powerful. "Besides," he frequently repeated, "I was very intimate with the Bishop of Autun. We passed some of the happiest years of our youth together, and I am sure he preserves the same feelings of friendship for me that I do for him." In fact, when the Count d'Artois was young and fond of pleasure he had often met M. de Talleyrand, thinking and acting the same things in his sacerdotal habit as the Count d'Artois did in the dress of a man of fashion. It is true the Count d'Artois had repented, and that M. de Talleyrand had not, but still the memories of the past formed between them a bond that was rather agreeable than otherwise. M. de Vitrolles assured the prince that M. de Talleyrand reciprocated his sentiments, but at the same time advised him not to call him "Bishop of Autun," and endeavoured to impress upon his memory that, having renounced holy orders and married, he was become Prince of Benevento, grand dignitary of the empire, and president of the Senate. Profiting of the warning, the Count of Artois corrected himself, called M. de Talleyrand Prince Benevento, but the next moment called him bishop again, again corrected himself, and made the same mistake repeatedly, and in these insignificant things gave a proof already of that luckless memory which had forgotten nothing, but could receive no new

impression, and which was destined on two future occasions to cause his fall and that of his august race.*

For the present the only point on which it was necessary to decide was, that they should employ those imperialists who consented to hand over the empire to the Bourbons; and on this point M. de Vitrolles and the Count d'Artois naturally agreed. But the prince wished to enter Paris immediately, and that his title of lieutenant-general of the kingdom should be recognised there, as emanating solely from his brother, Louis XVIII., who had not quitted Hartwell, a residence in the neighbourhood of London. In this M. de Vitrolles agreed with the prince, and he set out again for Paris, to negotiate his immediate return, and the unrestricted title of lieutenant-general. He had been exposed on the road, as we have seen, to the strangest accidents; he had been taken prisoner with M. de Wessenberg, set free with him, and arrived at Paris, where he fell suddenly into the midst of the circle at the Hôtel St. Florentin, at the moment when they were thinking very little about the Count d'Artois. M. de Talleyrand and his friends were endeavouring to free themselves successively from the bonds which still bound men and things to the empire. These bonds, although relaxed and almost broken, needed still to be definitely broken, and this required a little time. The Senate, having instituted a provisional government, was preparing to pronounce the deposition of Napoleon, but did not mean to accept the Bourbons without the guarantee of a constitution. M. de Talleyrand, who shared this opinion, had twenty-four hours before promised all the senators that it should be as they wished; and besides, the Emperor Alexander, who at that time sincerely admired liberal opinions, declared, with the sincerity that distinguished his first impressions, that Europe should receive liberty as well as peace, and that the good work should commence with France. There was consequently something else to be done during those three or four days than to receive the Count d'Artois with open arms. Napoleon was to be cast off by declaring his deposition, the form of the new government was to be determined, and a constitution drawn up which was to be made a condition of the new reign.

The astonishment of the Count d'Artois' messenger was extreme. M. de Vitrolles was naturally of an impetuous temper, anxious to take part in the most important affairs, even such as were beyond his position; he was, besides, vain of the dangers through which he had passed, and proud of his newly acquired

* I do not admire caricatures in history, and I do not wish to make one here; but I relate this anecdote because I consider it characteristic, and because it is to be found in the interesting, witty, and undoubtedly sincere Memoirs of M. de Vitrolles.

importance. Gifted with remarkable intelligence, he saw clearly that the Bourbons could not rule as formerly; but the presumption of imposing upon them conditions of any kind, written or implied, filled him with surprise and indignation (sentiments that were shared in by all the royalists of the time), and he would willingly have given utterance to some very unseasonable observations, if his impetuosity had not been restrained by the vastness of what was passing before his eyes. However, he saw that, before the prince could be received on any conditions, it was necessary that Napoleon should be dethroned, which was not yet done; and that it was also necessary to introduce this idea by degrees to that great body, the Senate, which, though not much esteemed by the public, still contained within it the remains of the French Revolution, and was armed with its great principles, and that all this was to be done in the presence of an army commanded by Napoleon in person. Contemplating these difficulties, M. de Vitrolles became gradually calmer, but he still continued to urge them, repeating constantly that the Count d'Artois was impatient to come, and anxious to testify his gratitude to MM. de Talleyrand and Dalberg, and that they could not decently keep him waiting long.

To this M. de Talleyrand opposed that benumbing influence with which he met all unwelcome importunities, as with mocking indifference he said slowly, first looking round with absent gaze, that it would be well to reflect that a good deal remained to be done before he could have the happiness of embracing the Count d'Artois, but the matter would be looked to as soon as possible. M. de Vitrolles heard from M. de Dalberg words still better calculated to cool him, if his ardour had not been so great. No person was more decidedly opposed to Napoleon than M. de Dalberg, but at the same time none could be more determined against the unconditional return of the Bourbons. He was a sincere liberal, and was never restrained by any consideration from expressing his opinions. "We must move quickly!" he said to M. de Vitrolles. "We must move steadily. Nothing is fixed here. It is with the greatest difficulty that we can succeed in having Napoleon's deposition definitely pronounced. Napoleon still intimidates everybody. We can only make use of the Senate, which, conquered by events, will yield; but it will require, and justly require, conditions. Besides, the Emperor of Russia, who rules everything here, is of the same opinion as the Senate. It is not from inclination that this prince accepts the Bourbons, and he considers that it is only with great precaution that France should be again delivered into their hands. You must learn to wait, and not pluck the fruit before it is ripe."

Indeed, no time had been lost. On the 31st of March, the

foreign sovereigns had arrived, and decided that they would not treat any longer with Napoleon or any member of his family. On the 1st of April a provisional government had been formed, and the address of the municipal body in favour of the Bourbons placarded through Paris. It was now only the morning of the 2nd of April, so that not a moment had been lost. But the hour was come to pass the decisive and essential act—the deposition of Napoleon. Appointing a provisional government was indeed declaring that Napoleon's government was no longer recognised, but it was necessary to declare it in a formal manner, and as the Senate had taken the first step, it could not refuse to take the second. However, if some senators wished to make themselves conspicuous by speaking and acting in the spirit of the day, the majority was stunned, silent, inactive, and although ready to pronounce the deposition of Napoleon, asked by looks, if not by words, that the formula should be drawn up by others, and that they should only be asked to sign it. But there were some members in the Senate who felt less embarrassment, and were more inclined to come forward—these were the members of the old opposition, who generally assembled at Passy, where, under the inspiration of M. de Sieyès, they expressed their disapprobation—alas! only too well deserved, of all the acts of the emperor. After twelve years of oppression, their hearts were full, and yearned to give vent to their sentiments. M. de Talleyrand, who had himself of late freely criticised the emperor's government, without, however, holding any connection with the opposition at Passy, considered it better to allow a free course to the sentiments of these gentlemen, and let them propose and draw up the act that declared the deposition of Napoleon. This task was committed to M. Lambrechts, an honest, simple, and hard-working man, who only thought of making himself useful, without considering whether he was serving the designs of men more crafty than he. The evening of the 2nd of April was spent in preparing the act of deposition, whilst those who drew it up were promised that attention would immediately be directed to the constitution—the formal and recognised condition of the return of the new dynasty.

The day on which this act was to be accomplished, M. de Talleyrand presented the Senate to the Emperor Alexander. This monarch, whose sole aim was to please the Parisians, had already walked on foot amongst them, regarding them with flattering smiles, and attracting their salutations by his personal beauty and gracious affability, scattering on every side well-timed phrases, and telling everybody he met how much he loved and admired the French, that he did not in the least blame them for the misfortunes of Russia, neither would he avenge himself on them, but, on the contrary, do them all the

good in his power; that he did not consider himself their conqueror, but their liberator, and that if he had overcome their resistance, he knew well it was because they thought and felt as he, and abhorred the yoke which had just been broken. These ideas, repeated in a thousand refined, delicate, and graceful forms, had produced their effect, and the national pride feeling soothed in presence of a conqueror so anxious to please the vanquished, yielded to his caresses, and returned them, and it is a fact that Alexander was become the most popular man in Paris. He alone, looked upon, thought of, or sought by those Parisians, dispensers of glory in modern times, was intoxicated with his success, and disposed to repay it by serving France in every way compatible with Russian ambition.

The Senate was presented to him on the evening of the 2nd of April. He received the members with the most perfect courtesy, repeated to them that he had not taken arms against France, but against a single man, that he had admired how the French had fought even in a cause they disliked, that he was too happy to see the end of this horrible struggle, and that as a proof of the satisfaction he felt, and the hope he experienced, that this struggle would not recommence, he had ordered that all the French prisoners throughout his dominions should be set free. The senators, charmed by everything that seemed an excuse for their submission, thanked Alexander most warmly for this magnanimous act, and promised on their side to do all that lay in their power to terminate the misfortunes of France and the world.

On this same day the Senate definitely pronounced the deposition of Napoleon. This document, embodied in two essential articles, declared that the hereditary sovereignty established in the persons of Napoleon and his descendants was abolished, and that all Frenchmen were absolved the oath they had sworn to him. The proposition once made, its unanimous adoption was a necessary consequence. It passed without any opposition, in a sad and solemn silence, like a decree already recorded elsewhere by a Power higher than the Senate, higher than this earth. No party was satisfied, but the old oppositionists, who did not conceal their sentiments. To them, therefore, was committed the task of explaining the causes that originated this decisive act. M. de Lambrechts accepted this commission, and speaking as if he were the organ of the Senate, he proposed the following reasons: "That Napoleon had violated every law in virtue of which he had been called upon to reign; that he had oppressed public and private liberty; arbitrarily imprisoned the citizens; imposed silence on the press; levied men and taxes, regardless of legal forms; shed the blood of the French in foolish and unnecessary wars; covered Europe with

corpses; strewed the roads with wounded Frenchmen; in short, had carried his audacity so far as to disregard the right of the national representatives of the nation to vote the taxes, by increasing contributions in the past January, without the consent of the Legislative Body; and not even respecting *la chose jugée*, when he annulled the year before the decision of the jury at Antwerp: that consequently Napoleon had forfeited the throne, and his descendants in his person."

M. de Lambrechts seemed to have forgotten that if personal freedom and the liberty of the press had been sacrificed, it was the duty of the Senate to prevent it, since that body was charged with the examination of all extraordinary acts relating to persons or writings; that if continually renewed conscriptions favoured the carrying on of universal wars, the Senate alone was to blame, for from 1804 to 1814 the conscriptions had been voted without opposition; that if in the levying of men and taxes the usual forms had been violated, it was also the fault of the Senate, for the power of voting troops and money had been transferred from the Legislative Body to the Senate, with the consent of the latter, and in violation of the imperial constitution; that, in short, if legal decisions had not been respected, the Senate was also to blame, since it had consented to annul the decision of the jury at Antwerp. Honest M. de Lambrechts, we say, seemed to have so thoroughly forgotten these facts, present to the memory of every one else, that the senators felt almost as much at their ease as if in presence of a public as forgetful as themselves. As to the rest, M. de Lambrechts' statement received the same silent consent as the act of deposition itself, and so anxious were the royalists to proclaim the result, that in order to save time, they had already placarded copies of the act of deposition through Paris, leaving the old oppositionists the task of explaining the motives on which they acted.

From this moment the essential act was accomplished, and the Senate in passing the act of deposition had freed the French from their oath to Napoleon and his family. However, it was not sufficient to break the legal bonds that bound France to the imperial dynasty; Napoleon should be deprived of the power of recovering the sceptre which had been wrested from his grasp; and although protected by two hundred thousand men, the authors of the revolution that was being accomplished were visited from time to time with a sense of terror, especially when they thought of him who was at Fontainebleau, of what he was doing, and what he could do. He had still the army that had fought under his command, reinforced by all he had collected en route, and by those who had fought beneath the walls of Paris; he had still the army, which was excellent,

though ill commanded by Augereau, the incomparable armies of the Marshals Soult and Suchet, which, it is true, were at a distance, but could easily be united to his troops by going to meet them or bringing them to him; he still had the Italian army! what might he not undertake with such means, exasperated as he was, and his military talents in full activity, as the events of the last two months had only too well proved? And at this moment could he not with the troops actually under his command make a descent upon Paris, and though he should not conquer, he might at least signalise his end by some tragic catastrophe, some brilliant vengeance, that would worthily crown his formidable career. The very idea of such possibilities was appalling, and indeed, very little confidence was felt by the crowds of royalists, old or new, that swarmed the Hôtel Talleyrand: they hawked the gossip of the day, they commented, they affirmed or denied the reports from Fontainebleau and its neighbourhood.

The only means to avert the danger was to excite some such feeling in the army as had been produced in the Senate. It was not, certainly, the civil servants of the empire that alone were weary of the rule of Napoleon; the same feeling was shared in more or less by very many of the military. Those unfortunate men who, often with wounded limbs, and without the slightest prospect of an end to their sufferings, had followed Napoleon from Milan to Rome, from Rome to the Pyramids, from the Pyramids to Vienna, from Vienna to Madrid, from Madrid to Berlin, from Berlin to Moscow—those few survivors of two million warriors were weary and exhausted, though certainly after another fashion than the Senate, that was tired of the fatigue of others. As long as glory and munificent gifts had been the reward of the unceasing dangers that threatened their lives, they had uncomplainingly followed their successful captain. But now that the structure of rewards, which, like the colossal edifice of the empire, had extended from Rome to Lubeck, had crumbled to the earth, and where glory was no longer the brilliant renown that follows victory, but the virtuous and bitter fame that attends heroically supported defeats, it would not be impossible by skilful intrigues to convert murmurs into complaints, and complaints into military sedition. Besides, there were very good reasons that could be adduced to military men, whom their own sufferings had already half persuaded, to induce them to leave an exacting master. They would not be asked to abandon Napoleon for foreigners or for the Bourbons, which might inspire some with honest scruples, or others with repugnance, but to leave him that they may rally round the provisional government which had risen from the misfortunes entailed by Napoleon on France; and after all, this government

was neither foreigners nor Bourbons, though the former were its support, and the latter its aim, but an assemblage of the most influential men of the imperial régime, who, in the midst of Paris—that was deserted by the wife and brother of Napoleon, left unprotected by an erroneous manœuvre on his part, and invaded by the enemy—had concerted how to save the country, how to reconcile it with Europe, and to put an end to this disastrous and henceforth useless struggle. As long as Napoleon represented and protected France, it was their duty to stand by him faithfully, whatever his faults may be; but now, when after a fatal complication of mistakes and reverses he was conquered, and could no longer do anything for France, except, perhaps, ruin her by continuing a calamitous war, was it not right to withdraw from a man who, although he still personified the glory of our arms, no longer represented the welfare of the nation, and to rally round a government which, without being prejudiced in favour of any institution or any dynasty, appealed to all good citizens to aid them in serving their country in this terrible crisis, leaving them free to consider afterwards (as their title "provisional" testified) under what laws and what royal family they would place free and ransomed France.

Such rational ideas were sure to be well received by all sensible men, and still more willingly by those who, like the principal military officers, were disgusted, weary, and anxious for their own interests, and the greater part of whom were suffering under private as well as public wrongs, for Napoleon had notoriously to find fault with more than one of his lieutenants during the last campaign, and he did so with all the abruptness of an impetuous and tyrannical temper. However, it must be told to their honour that none had shrunk before the enemy, and that those most tired of Napoleon's rule and most discontented had often been the bravest. But all things have an end, even devotedness itself, especially when men no longer see any legitimate cause for it, and consider themselves sacrificed to the passions of senseless masters. Now, Napoleon could not appear in any other light to men who were persuaded that it had always been in his power to make peace, and that he had refused to do so. He now experienced what all who do not habitually speak truth must experience —that truth itself is not believed from them. Napoleon had been blamable in not concluding peace at Prague, imprudent in not accepting it at Frankfort; but it was to his honour to refuse it at Chatillon; and at Fontainebleau, it was heroism to desire to prolong the war, that he might rescue Paris from the hands of the enemy. But he did not get credit for this, and the sorrow, the dignified sorrow, of M. de Caulaincourt was almost become a calumny of Napoleon. The regret that M. de Caulaincourt expressed because peace had been so often rejected, led

persons to imagine that lately, especially at Chatillon, it might have been accepted with honour, and it had been insanely refused. Napoleon was henceforth considered a furious madman, from whom they should at once, and at any cost, rescue both France and themselves.

Sometimes a violent feeling, resulting from physical fatigue, showed itself in the inferior ranks of the army; but a sunny day, a good meal, an hour's repose, or the sight of Napoleon, was sufficient to dispel it. It was amongst the commanding officers that the most dangerous species of weariness—moral fatigue—was exhibited, and this feeling increased in proportion to the rank, that is to say, to the penetration of those who felt it; strong in the generals, it was extreme in the marshals.

Amongst these was one man—no other than Marshal Marmont—who, perhaps, would have been least suspected, but whom M. de Talleyrand, with his facility in detecting the weak side of humanity, had pointed out as the man who would soonest yield to the good or bad reasons which could be employed to detach his most intimate lieutenants from Napoleon. This officer, whom Napoleon had created marshal and duke, more through affection for an old fellow-student than admiration for his talents, did not think himself appreciated under the imperial régime, or put in his true position, for it is undeniable that, though Napoleon felt a personal friendship for Marmont, and admiration for his courage, he thought little of his intellectual capacity. This presumptuous and unformed mind, partly candid, partly cunning, believing himself completely master of subjects of which he had only a superficial knowledge, desiring to assume the principal part, whilst at the very utmost he was fit for the second—not possessing sufficient superiority to direct, nor sufficient modesty to obey—was disagreeable to Napoleon, who preferred the simple and solid understanding of several of his marshals, who, if their intelligence was not very extensive, were at least punctual and energetic in obedience. He had consequently placed many men, whom Marmont believed his inferiors, in a position far superior to his. Besides this, Marmont had committed a serious fault at Craonne, and instead of being displeased with himself, was angry with Napoleon, though he had reproached him much less than his fault deserved. The wounds inflicted on his vanity were quite evident to M. de Talleyrand in the conversation he had with Marmont on the evening of the 30th of March, and he consequently pointed out this marshal as the term to which all the seductions of the royalists ought to tend. Discontented vanity is in every crisis the object round which intrigue can twine with the greatest possibility of success. Besides, at this moment, Marmont held a position which, as much as his natural disposition, would

attract those who sought to seduce him. He had just distinguished himself in the defence of Paris; and though half the honour by right belonged to Mortier, he had no hesitation in attributing it all to himself. He was stationed with his division on the Essonne, and protected Fontainebleau; and if he could be induced to join the provisional government, it would decide the question which the genius and indomitable spirit of Napoleon still rendered doubtful. The emissary chosen on this occasion, and who was perfectly well suited to the office, was M. de Montessuy, who had formerly been aide-de-camp to Marmont, and who had abandoned a military for a financial career, in which he had achieved an honourable success. M. de Montessuy shared in the healthy sentiments of the higher classes of the citizens respecting the war and the imperial dynasty. He possessed, besides, that influence over Marmont which aides-de-camp sometimes acquire over their generals, and which arises from a knowledge of their weaknesses, and a capability of turning them to profit. M. de Montessuy was sent to Essonne, furnished with letters for Marmont and the other chief officers from the principal members of the new government. To this was added another project, which promised to be no less efficacious. Since that Napoleon had retired to Fontainebleau, and had appeared to concentrate his forces there, a portion of the allied army had been stationed on the left bank of the Seine. The allied reserves were assembled in Paris and the environs, together with Bulow's division, which had been employed at the blockade of Chalons, and a large portion of the troops of the coalition was stationed between Juvisy, Choisy-le-Roi, Longjumeau, and Montlhéry. Prince Schwarzenberg had fixed his headquarters not far from the Essonne, that he might be ready to profit by the first symptoms of weakness in Marmont. Marmont was not the sole object of these intrigues: a military relative was sent to influence Marshal Oudinot; Beurnonville wrote to his friend Marshal Macdonald; and a number of emissaries, principally military men, were sent to Fontainebleau, and who were expected to be well received by the wavering and the unfaithful, as well as by all who were anxious to hear how things were going on at Paris.

The one theme of all these verbal or written communications was, that men belonged to their country, and not to an individual, to whom they might still be faithful, if, after compromising France, he was able to save her, but all that Napoleon could do would be to shed blood unnecessarily, of which too much had been already poured forth; that Europe was resolved not to treat with him, whilst she was ready to grant the most honourable conditions to any other government

than his; it was therefore necessary without delay to join the provisional government, with which Europe was now disposed to treat; that in joining this government they would give it strength, authority, in a word, the capability of making itself respected both by the allies and the Bourbons, against whom, whilst they recalled them, they wished to take all necessary legal precautions. To these sensible and honourable reasons were added others, less elevated, though by no means objectionable, such as that the Bourbons would receive with open arms all officers who would join them, and especially those that would declare themselves first.

Independent of these intrigues, the principal authors of the new revolution took care that M. de Caulaincourt should leave Paris, because, being admitted to the same familiarity by Alexander as when at St. Petersburg he represented the conqueror of Austerlitz and Friedland, his presence was as offensive to them as the Congress of Chatillon had been. In fact, whilst there was any appearance of negotiations being carried on with the deposed emperor, nothing seemed secure, and the royalists gave the czar to understand that it was neither wise nor generous to induce them to compromise themselves farther, if there were any probability of treating with Napoleon. Alexander saw this very clearly, and though from the natural goodness of his heart it would have pained him to tell the full truth to M. de Caulaincourt, he ultimately discouraged him, in order to force him to leave Paris without being necessitated to give an order to that effect. M. de Caulaincourt repeatedly told Alexander that he was the dupe of intriguers, of partisans, who deceived him as to the true sentiments of France, and that, wishing to complete his triumph, he perhaps exposed himself to some catastrophe that would involve Paris and the allied army in one common ruin. Alexander said he believed neither intriguers nor partisans, but trusted to his own eyes; that nobody desired Napoleon, that France was no less weary of him than Europe herself, that his friends must submit to necessity, and give up all hope of seeing him reign; that the allies knew well what he was capable of; but they were prepared, and in a short time their preparations would be still more complete; that the friends of Napoleon could only render him one service, which was to induce him to resign, as that was the only measure that could ameliorate his fate. In speaking thus of an ameliorated fate for Napoleon, Alexander, always anxious to conciliate M. de Caulaincourt, hinted to him that the question under consideration was a comfortable retreat for Napoleon, and a throne for his son, under the regency of Marie Louise. M. de Caulaincourt, although little inclined to idealise, began to conceive hopes, and he now said within himself, that the throne hinted at would be, perhaps, that of France, accorded

to the King of Rome, under the guardianship of his mother. Before returning to Fontainebleau, he made a last effort with Prince Schwarzenberg, whom, as the representative of Napoleon's father-in-law, and the negotiator of Marie Louise's marriage, ought to be kindly disposed to the Napoleon dynasty, if not to Napoleon himself. But M. de Caulaincourt found Prince Schwarzenberg still more discouraging than Alexander, and far less reserved in the expression of his sentiments. Wearied by the presence and the importunities of M. de Caulaincourt, he said it was better to tell him frankly that the allies would have nothing more to do with Napoleon or his family; that the Emperor of Austria had struggled for him to the last moment, and had proposed the armistice of Lusigny with the view of giving him an opportunity of coming to an accommodation, but that instead of corresponding to his paternal intentions, Napoleon had sent his father-in-law a letter which was most insulting to that monarch, as it seemed to imply that he was capable of deceiving his allies, and that that letter would have been dangerous for Europe had Austria been capable of yielding to his views; that from the date of that letter the deeply insulted Emperor Francis had adopted the resolution of no longer treating with Napoleon, in consequence of which the hazardous enterprise of marching to Paris was resolved on, and which, having succeeded, notwithstanding all the attendant dangers, the allies were determined to profit of their success; they would have nothing further to do with Napoleon on any terms, and finding public opinion in France coincide with theirs, he did not see why they should stop short in a path that alone was safe, for no repose could be expected but in getting rid of a man who during eighteen years had convulsed the world; that as for his wife and son, it was a mere chimera to think of confiding an empire to them, which neither the one nor the other was capable of governing; that, in fact, Austria would not assume such a responsibility; that it would be either the government of Napoleon continued under a fictitious name, or the weakest, the most impotent of governments, that would neither give rest to France nor security to Europe; it was therefore better to come to a determination, and M. de Caulaincourt, instead of vainly soliciting persons who received him with a deference induced by politeness, but with a deafness imposed by duty, would do better, with politeness, to tell the truth to Napoleon, and by inducing him to accept his fate, terminate a painful and protracted agony, alike disagreeable to himself, to France, and to Europe.

Irritated by such unmeasured words, M. de Caulaincourt, who liked to speak the undisguised truth, asked Prince Schwarzenberg whether it was not surprising that he, the minister of Napoleon's father-in-law, should be the most decided against

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him of all the representatives of Europe; that he, once the humble solicitor of Marie Louise's marriage, should be now the haughtiest despiser of that union, and of the moral obligations that resulted from it, and that he, the zealous and well-recompensed lieutenant of the Emperor of the French during the Russian campaign, should now view his military enterprises with so much severity; and in short, that with such recent opportunities of refreshing his memory, he should have forgotten what were the French army and its chief. "Perhaps you suppose," said M. de Caulaincourt proudly, "that because I, the constant apostle of peace, am here as a suppliant of that same peace which I desired as earnestly after the battles of Wagram and of Dresden as I do at present—perhaps you fancy that my sentiments are those of the master I serve; you mistake—his genius is as indomitable as ever. He is, moreover, exasperated. His soldiers share his sentiments; and if the Austrians were able, with an enemy in their capital, to fight the battle of Essling and Wagram, the French will not do less to wrest their country from the hands of foreigners, and indeed, there is not much vanity in believing that the French are as good as the Austrians, and Napoleon as valiant a leader as the Archduke Charles."

The bluntness of this address checked Prince Schwarzenberg somewhat, and he replied that he had never forgotten what he personally owed to Napoleon, but that he owed still more to his own sovereign; that he had indeed desired and even solicited the marriage of Marie Louise; that he was not ignorant of the obligations incurred by that contract, but he considered it a tie, not a chain; that, in consideration of this connection, Austria had done all in her power to open Napoleon's eyes, and to lead him to moderate measures, but without effect; that all things must come to an end, even family considerations; that as to desperate acts, such might naturally be expected from a man of genius commanding the French army, but the allies were prepared for that, and they, too, would fight with desperation; that if the French fought to tear their country from the hands of foreigners, the allied sovereigns would combat to wrest their independence from a pitiless tyrant; they had been slaves, but would be so no longer; that if they were forced to quit Paris, it would only be to return; and that the allies would not display less devotedness in fighting for their independence than the French in defending the integrity of their soil.

It is very evident that if Austria, either from motives of friendship or prudence, had wished to favour Napoleon in 1813, and was satisfied in offering him peace at Prague, to restrain his absolute dominion over Europe; that if at Frankfort she, from the same motives, had offered him France, together with

the Rhine and the Alps; and if, in fine, to avoid the risks of the march upon Paris, she had offered at Chatillon to leave him France as it was in 1790, it was evident that now, when all dangers had been surmounted, and all considerations satisfied, the Emperor of Austria would prefer to get rid of an insupportable son-in-law, and above all, share the fruits of the common victory, of which, indeed, his share would be large beyond his hopes, for, in depriving France of the Low Countries and the Rhenish provinces, and renouncing all claim to them herself, Austria would receive in exchange the line of the Inn, the Tyrol, and Italy. The doubtful and in many ways very embarrassing pleasure of seeing an archduchess Regent of France would not compensate for the risk of seeing this terrible son-in-law repossess himself of the sceptre; and Austria would therefore prefer indemnifying this archduchess at her own expense in Italy, than leave her at Paris, which would be virtually keeping the place for Napoleon. This very natural calculation did not prove that Francis II. was a bad father, but it proved that he preferred the interests of his people to that of his daughter, and no one can say that in doing so he neglected his first duty.

This explains the little support that Napoleon's cause met with from Prince Schwarzenberg, who followed only too plainly a policy which M. de Metternich, had he been at Paris, would have pursued with more precaution, but not with less constancy. Although M. de Caulaincourt, from what he had seen during the last three days, was convinced there was not the least chance of gaining a single friend for Napoleon, even among the most eminent servants of the empire, or among the representatives of the allies, he still wished for an interview with the Emperor Alexander, to know whether, if Napoleon were sacrificed, there would be any chance for his dynasty. Alexander received him with his usual cordiality, but repeated almost the same words he had used before, telling him that he ought to go to Fontainebleau, and advise a last and great sacrifice. "Go," he said to him, "for I am constantly asked to give an order for your departure, for it is said that your presence intimidates many persons, and makes them fear that we shall take the part of Napoleon. In the end I shall be obliged to order you to go, for neither my allies nor I wish to favour such suppositions. Believe me, I feel no resentment. Napoleon is now overtaken by misfortune, and I forget the injuries he has inflicted on Russia. Both France and Europe need repose, but with him on the throne they could never hope to obtain it. On this point we are irrevocably decided. Let him ask what he will for himself, there is no retreat that we are not willing to grant him; if he will accept the friendship I offer, and come to my

dominions, he shall receive there, not alone a magnificent but a cordial hospitality. We shall thus both give a great example to the world—I in offering, he in accepting, this asylum; but there is no other base of negotiation than his abdication. Go and return as quickly as possible, with powers to treat on the sole conditions that we can accept."

M. de Caulaincourt tried to discover whether Napoleon could secure the throne to his son by his own abdication. Alexander refused to give a decided answer, but said that nothing was irrevocably fixed with regard to the Bourbons, though everything looked favourable for them. He himself appeared to feel very coolly towards them, and again pressed M. de Caulaincourt to turn his attention as quickly as possible to the personal fate of Napoleon. M. de Caulaincourt, wishing to discover the views of the allies, asked if in case Napoleon were deprived of France, would they give him Tuscany as an indemnity. "Tuscany," exclaimed Alexander, "although, indeed, it is very little in comparison with France, could you expect that the allied powers would have Napoleon on the continent, or that Austria would suffer him in Italy? It is impossible." "Perhaps Parma or Lucca," replied M. de Caulaincourt. "No, no, nothing on the continent," said the emperor; "an island; let me see—Corsica perhaps." "But Corsica belongs to France," replied M. de Caulaincourt, "and Napoleon would not consent to accept that which had been wrested from himself." "Well, the island of Elba," added Alexander; "but go and induce your master to submit to a necessary resignation, and we shall consider the matter. Everything afterwards that is honourable and possible shall be done. I do not forget what is due to so great and so unfortunate a man."

At these words M. de Caulaincourt took his leave, convinced that without a military miracle there was absolutely no hope for Napoleon, and scarcely any for his son, and he felt it his duty to announce this sad truth to his master. He left on the evening of the 2nd of April, when the deposition was about to be pronounced, and with the conviction that it would be in a few hours. It was midnight when he arrived at Fontainebleau.

Whilst M. de Caulaincourt was seeking to strengthen the wavering friends of the empire in Paris, and to arrest the extreme resolution of the allies, Napoleon was not losing his time at Fontainebleau. Complaints were no more suited to the loftiness of his character than self-deception to the greatness of his mind. If he sometimes abandoned himself to illusions, it was as a self-excuse or self-encouragement in the execution of some rash design, without being at the same time the dupe of the illusions. In misfortune he did not hesitate to look truth

in the face, and met her aspect undismayed. Although at a distance from Paris, he almost divined what was passing there: he saw that the allies would seek to draw as much advantage as possible from their triumph, that the Senate would abandon him, and that arms alone would be his resource in this double danger. When he returned to Fontainebleau he called for his maps and the lists of his troops; he saw at a glance the brilliant but terrible chance that fortune still offered him, and determined that it should not escape.

The allies having lost twelve thousand men either by death or wounds, and having summoned Bulow's corps to Paris, now counted about one hundred and eighty thousand combatants. Napoleon had not less than seventy thousand, counting the corps of Marshals Mortier and Marmont, together with some troops from the banks of the Yonne and Seine. The disproportion was enormous; but the ardour of the army—we mean of the inferior ranks—the genius of Napoleon, and many local circumstances, might compensate for this numerical inferiority; and everything indicated a mighty catastrophe either for the capital or the coalition. If we consider what would have been gained had he succeeded, France restored to greatness by a single blow—we mean by this not an insane but desirable greatness—the boundary of the Rhine, and not of the Elbe—we do not hesitate to say that the possible gain justified the risk, though even all the splendour of Paris had been destroyed in one bloody day. The Rhine frontier would compensate for what might be destroyed in the capital; we should withdraw our admiration from men who accompanied Napoleon to Moscow, if they now refused to follow him to Paris.

However this may be, Napoleon conceived a plan of whose success he had not the least doubt, and which to posterity must appear at least probable. Since Napoleon had fixed his centre of operation at Fontainebleau, the allied forces had been divided into three bodies, one of eighty thousand men on the left of the Seine, between the Essonne and Paris; another within the walls of Paris itself; and the third outside, on the right of the Seine. This disposition of the foreign troops Napoleon considered as fatal to themselves, provided he could profit of it. His plan was to cross the Essonne suddenly with his army, and driving back Prince Schwarzenberg's eighty thousand men on the suburbs of Paris, call upon the citizens to join him, and profiting of the probable confusion of the allies, thus unexpectedly attacked, he could destroy them, either by entering Paris along with them, or immediately crossing, by the bridges of which he was master, to the right bank of the Seine, and cut off their line of retreat. Indeed, it is possible that with seventy thousand men under his command he would

overthrow the eighty thousand immediately opposed to him, and that those driven back upon Paris would enter the town in confusion, where the slightest assistance from the Parisians would change this disorder into flight, and Napoleon, either following close on their heels or passing to the right bank of the Seine, where he could cut off their line of retreat, would place the allies in a position from which they would have great difficulty in freeing themselves, even were they—which they were not—headed by the greatest of captains. It is also very probable that after such an event, and aided by the peasants of Burgundy, Champagne, and Lorraine, who would not fail to attack the conquered allies, since they did not hesitate to attack them when conquerors, that Napoleon would soon have forced back the coalition upon the Rhine. If he was mistaken, it would be better, in our opinion, to have erred with him that day than to have erred with him at Wilna in 1812, or at Dresden in 1813. Besides, he did not consider the risk to Paris; he estimated his capital as the Russians did Moscow; and he considered that too high a price could not be paid to exterminate an enemy that had penetrated to the very heart of France.

Imperturbable in the midst of the most exciting circumstances, and always passing directly from the conception of his plans to the execution, he immediately issued his orders. He placed Marshals Marmont and Mortier along the river Essonne, Marmont at Essonne itself, and Mortier at Mennecy. He had strengthened Marmont's corps with the Souham division, comprising at least six thousand men. He replaced Marmont and Mortier's artillery, part of which had been left outside the walls of Paris; he also furnished them with sixty pieces of cannon fully supplied. He commanded them to surround Corbeil with earthworks, that they might take possession of the bridge, independently of that of Melun, of which he was master; he would thus be able to manœuvre according to circumstances on both sides of the river. They were to collect at Corbeil all the supplies of grain abundantly distributed along that side of the river, and to manufacture at the powder-mills at Essonne as much powder as possible. He had stationed his cavalry *en échelon* in the direction of Arpajon, in order to be in communication with Orleans, whither he had summoned his wife and son, together with his brothers and ministers. He had ordered the young guard to advance between Chailly and Ponthierry, to keep the position for Oudinot, Macdonald, and Gerard, who were soon to arrive with their corps. Lastly, he sent forward the troops that, under General Alix, had so well defended the Yonne, and thus made his arrangements to have the army concentrated behind the Essonne on the 4th, the earliest possible

date, considering the distance from St. Dizier to Fontainebleau. He every day reviewed the troops that joined, and without explaining himself fully, gave them hopes of a brilliant revenge for the defeat they had suffered before the walls of the capital. At sight of Napoleon the guards uttered wild cries, horse and foot, brandishing their sabres or their guns, mingling with their usual cry of "Long live the emperor!" the more significant one of "To Paris, to Paris!" The other divisions of the army, consisting of younger men, more sensible of fatigue, arrived sometimes weary and dispirited. But they could not resist the presence of Napoleon, nor the view of his countenance, at once thoughtful and inspired, and after a little repose these caught the contagion of sentiments whose focus was in the imperial guards. On the other hand, the principal officers were seized with astonishment; Napoleon's presence embarrassed them, and even irritated without animating them. They dared not deny that a last and fatal battle was a duty due to their country, if it could thus be saved, but they exclaimed against the idea of that battle being fought in Paris, if it were there he intended to fight, which, indeed, they did not know, but which they reported to be the case, to render the project the more odious. Their aides-de-camp and flatterers asserted the same thing. But it was very different with the officers immediately attached to the troops, who only spoke of avenging the honour of their arms, and instilled the same feeling into their men. Thus, the moment that Napoleon appeared, violent transports burst forth on every side, and all manifested a common sentiment, not, indeed, of devotion to his person, but of exasperation against the enemy, and those traitors who, they said, had betrayed the capital.

There are days, sad days! when it is difficult to see clearly what is our duty, when even hearts the most sincere are perplexed. This was the case now, and an honest man might in all sincerity hold one opinion at Paris, and a different one at Fontainebleau. We can easily understand how in Paris one could, without feeling any esteem for the Senate, adhere to its decisions, and prefer peace and liberty under the old dynasty, to a perpetual war under a violent and arbitrary government; whilst at Fontainebleau, on the contrary, to brave soldiers not obliged to choose between two different systems of policy, but called on to expel foreigners from their native land, the mere hope of crushing the coalition, were it even amidst the ruins of Paris, might be the cause of boundless enthusiasm. Indeed, although truth is independent of local position, and that what is truth in one place is not falsehood elsewhere, still it seems to us that a good deal depends on the point from which we view it, and that duty assumes different aspects according to

circumstances. In Paris, good citizens were called on to choose between the charter and the Bourbons; in Fontainebleau, soldiers, in the mere hope of expelling an enemy from their land, were bound to expose their lives once more, and it would be more patriotic to die now before Essonne, than formerly at Austerlitz or Jena, for they would now unquestionably die for their country, and sacrifice themselves, not to exalt success, but to aid misfortune.

We repeat that the public mind must necessarily be deeply agitated amidst such great events, and this M. de Caulaincourt found to be the case when, on the night of the 4th of April, he appeared at Napoleon's door, where the unoccupied staff that guarded it besieged him with questions, and implored him to tell the truth to the emperor. This noble-minded man needed no persuasion on that point. He related, in a simple and straightforward manner, without reserve, all that he had seen and heard during his stay at Paris; he did not conceal from Napoleon the furious passions that were excited against him, nor the extreme resolutions of the sovereigns with regard to him; but though he had never hesitated to advise, he dared not do so now, so great would be the difficulty of forming an opinion, and so useless and cruel would it be even to insinuate the slightest counsel. Napoleon received M. de Caulaincourt very mildly, and with visible signs of gratitude, and appeared neither disturbed nor astonished at what he heard. He had already learned from different persons some of the facts related by M. de Caulaincourt, and he had divined the rest. He was aware of the appointment of the provisional government, and the passing of the act of deposition, but not of the adduced motives; he was also aware of the efforts made to overturn his statue. "It is well done," said he to M. de Caulaincourt, "and is only what I deserve. I did not desire statues, for I know that it is only those erected by posterity that are safe; to conserve those erected during life, one must be always successful. Denon wished to flatter, I had the weakness to yield, and you see what I have gained. But let us talk of something more important. Nothing in your recital surprises me; Talleyrand wishes to revenge himself on me, and the Bourbons will avenge me on him. But those men of the Revolution that fill the Senate, and amongst whom there is more than one regicide, are very imprudent to throw themselves into the arms of foreigners, who will hand them over to the Bourbons; but they are frightened, and seek their safety where they may. As to the allied sovereigns, they only wish to humble France; however, they do not act well towards me. I could have dethroned the Emperor Francis and King William, and could have excited the Russian peasants against Alexander, and I did not do it; I acted towards

them like a king, and they behave to me like Jacobins—this is giving a bad example. Alexander is the least hostile amongst them; he has had his revenge, and moreover, is good-hearted, though cunning. The Austrians are what I have ever found them—humble in adversity, and insolent and heartless in prosperity; the emperor almost forced me to take his daughter, and now he acts as though that daughter were not his. Schwarzenberg is the advocate of emigration, and Metternich of the English; my father-in-law lets them have their way, we shall see whether he will allow them to follow out their views; the empress hopes he will not. As for the English and Prussians, what they want is to annihilate France. All is not finished yet. The allies wish to put me aside, because they feel that I alone can restore our fallen fortunes. Believe me, I do not value a throne; born a soldier, I can become a citizen again. You know my tastes; what is it I need? A little bread should I live; six feet of earth if I die. It is true that I have loved and still love glory. . . . But my fame is beyond the reach of man. . . . If I seek to rule a few days longer, it is that I may restore the honour of our arms, and wrest France from her implacable enemies. You have done well in not signing any document, for I could not subscribe to the conditions that would have been imposed on you. The Bourbons may accept such conditions with honour—the France they are offered is only what they have made her themselves; I could not do so. We are soldiers, Caulaincourt, and what is death in such a cause as ours? Besides, do not fancy that our fate is definitely decided; if I had my army, I should have already made an attack, and all would be over in two hours, for the enemy is in a position of imminent danger. What glory, should we succeed in driving them forth! what glory for the Parisians to expel the Cossacks from their capital, and hand them over to the peasants of Burgundy and Lorraine, who would finish them! But it is only a short delay. After to-morrow I shall have the corps of Macdonald, Oudinot, and Gerard, and if they follow me, I shall soon change the aspect of affairs. The chief men of the army are weary of this work, but the mass will march; my *old moustaches of the guard* will give the example, and not a single man will refuse to follow them. In a few days, my dear Caulaincourt, all may be changed, and then what satisfaction—what glory!"

After pronouncing these words, with calmness mingled with a warmth of feeling that sought vent in words, Napoleon dismissed M. de Caulaincourt to repose, and soon fell into a profound sleep himself.

He passed the following day, the 3rd April, in reviewing his troops and making preparations, and his countenance, some-

times shaded by thought, sometimes lighted with animation, and the flame of genius sparkling in his eyes, he seemed filled with some mighty project that he was anxious to put into execution. In this all-important moment the soldiers could not resist the effect of his presence, and though weary and exhausted, they cried in almost frenzied accents, "Long live the emperor!" In the rage excited by the tales of the old guards, who related, with the credulity common to camps, that Paris had been lost by treason, they felt no other desire than to tear their capital from the hands of traitors. As we mentioned before, these sentiments, common to the soldiers and officers immediately in command, were not shared by the staff. The emissaries who had come from Paris, mingling among these latter, asserted that Napoleon had been legally deposed, and that those who continued to obey him only obeyed a rebel, and became, by the fact, rebels themselves; that it was now time to abandon a man who had ruined France, and who would ruin them also, if they did not abandon him, and rally round the paternal government of the Bourbons, that awaited them with open arms; that, indeed, with this government alone was peace to be hoped for, as Europe was resolved to destroy Napoleon and his adherents. They also said that by quitting what was henceforth a rebellious camp, they would preserve their rank, pensions, and dignity, and still enjoy, beneath the shade of a protecting throne, the glory they had acquired, and which none could deny them; whilst, pursuing an opposite course, they would be surrounded by 400,000 enemies, and cut off to a single man. It was not difficult to make reasons valid in the weary and anxious minds of the commanding officers, and excite them to an extraordinary outburst, not alone against the political errors of Napoleon, which were only too real and disastrous, but also against his pretended military errors. According to them he was only an adventurer who had had a run of good luck, which he abused until he exhausted it. 1813 had been but a succession of blunders; it was the same in 1814, and quite lately he committed a fresh mistake in seeking an enemy at St. Dizier who ought to have been sought at Paris. And now, made more desperate by misfortunes, he wanted to fight a last battle, and sacrifice the poor remains of his army. Let there be a last battle, they said, if it will restore the honour of our arms and save France. But Napoleon, in his rage against the Parisians, has resolved to fight this battle in the very heart of Paris, with the intention, apparently, of killing as many Parisians as Austrians, Prussians, or Russians. Napoleon's enemies industriously spread the report that this battle was to be fought in Paris itself, in order to attach the greater odium to this last great effort, and in admitting that the risk ought to be incurred if there were any chance of thereby

saving France, they demanded, with a terror sometimes feigned, sometimes sincere, whether it was not the act of a madman or a barbarian, to seek to convert Paris into a battlefield, and thus give the allied sovereigns a legitimate reason for turning the capital of France into a new Moscow.

Such discourses excited the members of the different staffs to the highest degree; and whilst a truly patriotic fury animated the guard, and from them passed to the inferior ranks of the army, a very different feeling took possession of the different staffs and commanding officers. This double current of contradictory opinions only increased during the course of the 3rd day of April, influenced also by information coming from Paris or the outposts.

On the following morning, the 4th April, Napoleon seemed at last to have decided to act. He explained his plans to M. de Caulaincourt. The troops under Macdonald, Oudinot, and Gerard were expected to arrive that day, and by granting them a day's rest, he expected to be able the next day, the 5th, or at furthest, on the 6th, to let them fall into line, and attack the enemy with 70,000 men. He had no doubt of his success. Early in the morning he gave orders that the guards should leave, and station themselves behind Marmont and Mortier on the Essonne, in order to support the movement, and at the same time to leave room for the troops that were to arrive. Having reviewed the corps that were to leave, he assembled the officers and sub-officers in a circle round him, and in sonorous voice addressed them in the following energetic words:—

"Soldiers, the enemy, in stealing three marches on us, have rendered themselves masters of Paris. They must be expelled. Frenchmen, unworthy of the name—emigrants, whom we had the weakness to pardon formerly—have made common cause with the foreigners, and mounted the white cockade. Cowards! they shall receive the reward of this additional crime. . . . Let us swear to conquer or die, to avenge the insult offered to our country and our arms."

"We swear it!" cried those old officers, all on fire with devotion to their standard, and then dispersed to communicate the ardour that consumed them to their men. The troops defiled, uttering wild acclamations.

When this scene was ended, Napoleon mounted the staircase of the palace, followed by a crowd of officers, some still under the influence of the enthusiasm which had just been aroused, but others with very different sentiments. They immediately formed groups around the marshals, and unanimously asserted that the resolution was evidently taken to risk their existence and the fate of France in a last scene of madness, and they

must prevent such folly by protesting against it. This was the unanimous opinion, but each wished to avoid being the first to speak. The aides-de-camp surrounded the generals, the generals surrounded the marshals, and exciting each other mutually, they demanded that their chiefs should refuse to obey. Marshal Macdonald was only just arrived, for he had not quitted his division. As he was alighting from his horse, still covered with mud, he was presented with a letter from Beurnonville, bearing the following erroneous address, "For Marshal Macdonald, Duke of Ragusa." This letter was sent to Marmont, as Duke of Ragusa, and he, having read it, perceived from the contents that it was meant for Marshal Macdonald, and forwarded it to him. This letter conjured Macdonald, in the name of friendship, in the name of his family, to whom he was tenderly attached, and who ran the risk of perishing amidst the flames of the capital, to abandon a tyrant who was no longer anything but a rebel, and join the legitimate government of the Bourbons, who were about to re-enter France, bearing peace in one hand and liberty in the other. Macdonald had preserved in his heart the sentiments of the army of the Rhine; he was irritated by what he had seen and suffered during the two last campaigns, and he was passionately attached to his children. He had just heard from them—they were still in Paris: he was overpowered with sorrow. The officers surrounded him; he said he ought to join his colleagues, and contribute to put an end to this hateful and frantic reign. He consented, and only asked time to change his dress for one more suitable. They had by this time arrived at the door of Napoleon's cabinet, and they resolved not to leave the antechamber, but watch over the marshals and defend them, if, after the scene that was about to take place, Napoleon should put them under arrest. There were some officers in this kind of mutiny who were even mad enough to cry that they ought to get rid of Napoleon.* In a word, it was a repetition of one of those military revolts of which the Roman empire had given such odious examples, and it must be admitted that a reign so deplorably warlike met with a worthy end in the midst of a military sedition.

The marshals entered. They were Lefebvre, Oudinot, and Ney. Macdonald was to join them. They found Napoleon surrounded by Major-General Berthier, the Dukes of Bassano and Vicence, and several other eminent persons. Napoleon had taken off his hat and sword, and was walking about his cabinet, speaking with more than ordinary vehemence. The marshals

* I have received these sad details from eye-witnesses, respectable men, whom I could name, and who may be ranked amongst the most honourable men of their time.

were dejected, embarrassed, and afraid to speak. Napoleon, divining the cause of their silence, and wishing to make them break it, asked them if they had any news from Paris, to which they replied that they had, and very disagreeable news. He asked what was their opinion. "All that has happened," said they, "has been very sad, very deplorable; but what was saddest of all was, that there was no probable end to this cruel state of affairs." "The end," replied Napoleon, "depends on us. You see those brave soldiers, who have neither rank nor pensions to save, and who only think of marching forward, of dying, that they may tear France from the hands of strangers. We must follow them. The allies are divided on both banks of the Seine, of which we have the principal bridges, and dispersed in an immense city. Vigorously attacked in this position, they are lost. The Parisians are burning for revenge; they will not allow the foreigner to depart without pursuing them, and then the peasants will complete their destruction. Without doubt they may return; but Eugène has returned from Italy with 36,000 men, Augereau has 30,000, Suchet 20,000, Soult 40,000. I can summon to our aid the greater part of these forces. I have 70,000 men here, and with this mass I shall throw into the Rhine all that shall have left Paris and wish to return there. We shall save France—we shall avenge our honour—and then I will accept a moderate peace. What does it need to accomplish all this? One last effort, that will allow you to enjoy in repose the benefits of twenty-five years of labour."

These reasons, though very striking, did not seem to please the listeners. They objected to Napoleon, that though it might be legitimate to risk a last battle, provided it might be of use, and not the cause of irremediable catastrophe, still it would be frightful to fight it in the centre of Paris, and to turn the capital into another Moscow. To this, Napoleon replied that it was a calumny to say he wished to avenge himself on the Parisians; that he did not mean to turn Paris into a battlefield, but he would attack the enemy wheresoever Providence gave him an opportunity, and that in the actual position of the allies they would necessarily be destroyed. Then addressing himself to Lefebvre, Oudinot, and Ney, he asked them if they desired to live under the Bourbons? To this they replied by loud exclamations. Lefebvre, with the violence of an old Jacobin, declared he would not, and in this he was sincere. Ney expressed himself with incredible vehemence: he said that his children could never enjoy comfort or safety under the Bourbons, and that the only desirable sovereign for them was the King of Rome. "And do you believe," replied Napoleon, "that in abdicating, I shall secure to you and your children the

advantage of living under my son?" Do you not see that the proposal of a regency during the minority of the King of Rome is only a cunning falsehood, invented for the purpose of separating you from me, and by that means destroying us both. The government of my wife and son would not stand one hour, and then you would have an anarchy that, in perhaps a fortnight, would end with the Bourbons. Besides," he said, "there are family secrets that I cannot divulge. . . . A government directed by my wife is impossible." Napoleon alluded to the reasons that had induced him to order his wife to leave Paris, the chief of which was the weakness of Marie Louise's character, with which he was well acquainted. When Napoleon spoke to the marshals of living under the Bourbons, they burst forth into violent exclamations of abhorrence; but when he mentioned his abdication and its possible consequences, they did not speak, but their silence showed that it was what they desired. Napoleon understood them, but did not let it appear. At this moment Macdonald, disturbed and anxious, entered, holding Beurnonville's letter in his hand. "What news do you bring?" said Napoleon. "Very bad," replied the marshal. "I am told that there are two hundred thousand of the enemy in Paris, and that we are going to fight them there. It is a frightful idea. . . . Is it not time to put an end to all this?" "The question is not," said Napoleon, "whether we shall fight in Paris, but whether we shall not profit of the mistakes of our enemies." Then a discussion commenced, and the emperor asked Macdonald what was the letter about that he held. Macdonald replied, "Sire, I keep nothing secret from you, you can read it." "Nor I from you," said Napoleon; "let it be read aloud." M. de Bassano took the letter and read it with that embarrassment and pain which a subject who is still respectful and attached to his master must feel under such circumstances. Napoleon listened with a disdainful calmness, and when it was ended, without blaming the frankness of Macdonald, he said that Beurnonville and such men were only intriguers, who, with the assistance of foreigners, were trying to bring about a counter-revolution, that they would end by ruining France, and weakening her for ever; that the Bourbons, far from pacifying France, would only throw her into confusion, whilst with a little perseverance the present state of affairs could be changed in two hours. "Yes," replied Macdonald, whose heart was grieved by the thought of a battle in Paris, "yes, that might be, but at the expense of reducing our capital to ashes, and fighting probably over the corpses of our children." The marshal also declared, without venturing to say that he would not obey, that the soldiers were not to be depended on. Ney seemed to confirm this assertion. Having

thus reached the limit that separates respect from revolt, the marshals sought to cast the blame of disobedience upon the soldiers, whilst they themselves were alone in fault. Napoleon saw this, and said proudly—"If your soldiers will not obey you, they will obey me; I need but speak a word to lead them where I will." Then, in a tone of haughtiness that forbade reply, he added—"Retire, gentlemen, I shall consider, and let you know my determination."

They left the room, quite astonished at their own daring, little as it had been, and in admiration of their courage, made themselves appear more guilty than they really were, by declaring to their aides-de-camp that they had cast aside all fear, and boldly told the truth.*

They retired, awaiting the result of this very extraordinary scene; for when Napoleon was in full possession of his power, they had never ventured to address an observation to him, when, perhaps, a single word would have arrested his descent into the abyss.

On that day Napoleon had but to step outside his cabinet, and appeal from the marshals to the colonels and soldiers, and he would have found enthusiastic servants ready to follow him where he would, and ready also to avenge him on ungrateful men overloaded with his benefits. But to expect that he would at that moment turn from the door of his palace an entire staff, composed of generals and marshals, who during twenty years had lavished their blood for him, and form another of colonels and brigadiers, and so commence a formidable military operation, would be asking too much even from the most determined and energetic character.

When Napoleon found himself alone with Berthier, Caulaincourt, and Bassano, he gave free course to his suppressed indignation.

"Did you see them?" he said, "did you see how excited they were when I mentioned the restoration of the Bourbons, and

* It has been spoken, written, and repeated in every variety of form, that the scene that took place in Napoleon's cabinet, on the morning of the 4th of April, had been one of violence carried so far as threats—so far, in fact, as to force him to abdicate. I have before me at this moment the manuscript memoirs of two most respectable witnesses of this scene, I have collected information from several credible ocular witnesses, and I am convinced that the reports spread on this subject are all misrepresentations. In fact, the aim and result of this interview were to wrest a conditional abdication from Napoleon, but as to the mode of execution, it did not exceed what I relate. The exaggerated versions, whose veracity I dispute, drew their origin, their sad origin, in the boasting of some military men who, wishing to make themselves of importance, a few days later represented themselves as more culpable than they really were, and which they regretted the following year. It was their boastings, still further exaggerated by the propagators of false reports, that gave rise to such misrepresentations, and I am convinced that the truth is contained in what I relate.

how silent when I spoke of my abdication? That is what they want, for they have been persuaded that, by setting me aside, they could enjoy the riches I have lavished on them, under the government of my son. Shortsighted creatures, they do not perceive that there is no choice but between me and the Bourbons; they cannot see that my wife and son are only a shadow that would fade away in a few days or months."

He then complained of their daring to read such a letter to him as Beurnonville's, and expatiated on the weakness and ingratitude of men. M. de Caulaincourt tried to calm him, saying that Marshal Macdonald was a noble-minded man, and had only shown the letter in compliance with the emperor's wish; that this repugnance to fighting in Paris, which was only a pretext with some, was with others a deep and honest feeling; he then added that the project of abdicating in favour of his son was very generally received, and that it was, in fact, the only base on which they could still negotiate.

Napoleon soon recovered that equanimity with which great minds rise superior to circumstances, and acknowledged that the popular idea of the hour was his abdicating in favour of the King of Rome, which perhaps afforded some satisfaction to anxious minds, and that he was quite ready to yield to public opinion, if it were only to prove the folly of such a plan.

"I am satisfied," he said to M. de Caulaincourt, "that you should return to Paris, and offer to negotiate on this basis, and even that you take with you the marshals most enamoured of this project—you will rid me of them, which will be no small advantage, for I have men to fill their places; and whilst you occupy the allies with this new proposition, I shall advance, and finish all, sword in hand. You must hasten your departure, for twenty-four hours hence you will not be able to pass the outposts."

Napoleon seized at once the proposition of his abdication as an opportunity of gaining two or three days more, of setting the vigilance of the enemy to sleep, of satisfying the marshals, and of ridding himself of some of them who were become particularly troublesome. He added, however, that if the regency of his wife during the minority of his son were accepted on conditions that were both honourable and likely to support the new order of things, it was very possible he would consent. Notwithstanding that he spoke thus, there was very little chance that a negotiation should succeed which he intended to interrupt so soon with the roar of his cannon.

Having so suddenly given this new aspect to affairs, the next thing was to choose the men who should accompany M. de Caulaincourt to Paris. M. de Caulaincourt wished to have Berthier with him, that he might add weight to military con-

siderations, and Bassano, as he could best represent the feelings of Napoleon; but the emperor would not listen to the proposal. He could not part with Berthier, who transmitted his orders to the army; and he said, that although Bassano was not in any way accountable for the late wars, that still he was responsible for them in the eyes of the public and of the allied sovereigns. He would only consent to M. de Caulaincourt's being accompanied by two or three of the marshals. He mentioned Ney first of all. "He is the bravest of men," said he, "but at this moment I have men that will fight as well as he, and you will rid me of him. But you must watch him, he is a mere child—if he fall into the hands of Alexander or Talleyrand, he is lost, and you will not be able to do anything with him. Take Marmont also, he is devoted to me, and will assert my son's rights." Then reflecting for a moment, he said—"No, you cannot take Marmont, he is too much needed on the Essonne." Macdonald was then proposed, who would have more influence than Marmont, as he had never been considered a flatterer, and besides, being a perfectly honest man, he would defend the interests confided to him with as much zeal as if they were his own. Napoleon consented to this arrangement, and drew up himself the act of his conditional abdication with the tact and haughtiness of language that ever distinguished the emanations of his pen. The marshals were then summoned to his presence.

"I have reflected," he said, "on our position, and on the sentiments with which it has inspired you, and I am resolved to test the sincerity of the allied sovereigns. They say that I am the only obstacle to the peace and happiness of the world. Well, then, to remove this prejudice, I am willing to sacrifice myself, and resign the throne, but on condition that it shall be transferred to my son, who shall be placed under the regency of the empress during his minority. Does this arrangement suit you?"

At these words, which freed the marshals from all embarrassment, for it would suit them much better to live under the government of a woman and child of their own party than under that of the Bourbons, who were strangers to them, they seized the hands of Napoleon, clasped them with the deepest emotion, and declared that at no period of his life had he shown himself so truly great.

When they had made an end of these demonstrations, which were by no means agreeable to Napoleon, though he did not show the annoyance he felt, he said to them—"Now that I have yielded to your wishes, it is your duty to defend the rights of my son, which indeed are your own; and to do so, not alone with your swords, but by your moral influence." He then

said that he had appointed two of them to accompany the Duke of Vicence to Paris, and there negotiate the establishment of Marie Louise's regency. He mentioned Ney and Marmont, saying how he had at first thought of Marmont, and why he had changed his mind. Ney was greatly flattered by being chosen, and Macdonald also, who felt it the more, as he had never been one of Napoleon's personal friends. "Marshal," said the emperor to the latter, "you know that I have entertained prejudices against you; but that is past; I have full confidence in your honour, and am convinced that you will be the firmest defender of my son's interests."

Saying these words, he extended his hand, which Macdonald pressed warmly between his, and promised to justify the confidence the emperor reposed in him on this occasion, and this promise he nobly fulfilled. Though Napoleon renounced the idea of sending Marmont to Paris, he left his plenipotentiaries free to take him with them as they passed through Essonne, if they thought he could be useful, in which case he would appoint some one to take his place. When these explanations were over, Napoleon read the following act, which he had just drawn up.

"The allied powers having declared that the Emperor Napoleon was the only obstacle to the re-establishment of peace in Europe, the Emperor Napoleon, faithful to his oath, declares he is ready to descend from the throne, to quit France, or even life, for the welfare of his country, inseparable from the rights of his son, from those of the regency of the empress, and the laws of the empire. Given at our palace of Fontainebleau, 4th April 1814."

This act being received with universal approbation, Napoleon took a pen to sign it, but before affixing his signature, conscious of the importance of what he was about to do, notwithstanding the secret projects that he cherished, he felt a poignant regret, not for the throne, but for the chances that might be lost, and still thinking of the imprudent disposition of the enemy's forces, he cried—"And yet—yet we could beat them if we would." After this exclamation, which made all present droop their heads, he signed the document, handed it to M. de Caulaincourt, and dismissed his three ambassadors, still feeling more inclined to fight than to negotiate, and resolved, provided he did not lose the means that were in his hands, to interrupt by the roar of cannon this new negotiation that was about to be opened at Paris.

The marshals, accompanied by M. de Caulaincourt, immediately quitted Fontainebleau, in order to repair to the allied sovereigns, and by Napoleon's orders they were to pass through Essonne, and stop at Prince Schwarzenberg's headquarters, to

ask permission to pass the outposts. They arrived at Essonne about five in the evening, and immediately called on Marmont to acquaint him with their mission, and that he was authorised to accompany them. To their great surprise they found him cold, embarrassed, and disinclined to join them. Alas! the unfortunate man had yielded to the snares that had been weaving around him for the last four days!

His old aide-de-camp, M. de Montessuy, who had been sent to him, had arrived the previous evening, and given him letters from the provisional government, whose reasoning he supported with his private exhortations. It was not difficult for this envoy to speak warmly on the subject, for in common with all the more influential commercial men of Paris, he was firmly convinced that it was time to withdraw from an arbitrary government, which was so disastrously warlike, and which had thrown France into an abyss from which it could not rescue her. The agent of the provisional government, knowing all the avenues to the heart with which he had to deal, had provided himself with a variety of arguments to accomplish his purpose. Having first dilated on the patriotism of Marmont, he next attacked his vanity and ambition. He did not forget to say that, in the last campaign, Marmont had covered himself with glory, that the eyes of France, of Europe, were fixed on him; that he alone of all the marshals had sufficient political knowledge to understand what present circumstances demanded; that those circumstances imperatively commanded to separate from Napoleon, and join and strengthen the provisional government authorised to conclude peace, to recall the Bourbons, and recalling, impose on them the restriction of a wise constitution; that by assisting in this excellent work he would play the same part in the military that Talleyrand played in the political world; that under the Bourbons he had only to choose his place, for that no reward could be too great for the services he would have rendered, and he would thus unite the double advantage of serving his country and of being magnificently rewarded.

There was of course a great deal of truth in all that was said to the unfortunate Marmont, and the man who said it was perfectly sincere. It is quite true that for simple citizens free from all personal engagements, and ignorant of the position of military affairs, not knowing whether it was still possible to defeat the allies and to wrest conquered France from their hands, the best thing was to join the Bourbons, and united with them, obtain a more equitable peace and a less despotic government. But such considerations should not have had any weight with an officer laden with the gift of Napoleon, and still less with a soldier charged with such a trust as guarding the

Essonne with 20,000 men—a trust not alone important to Napoleon, but to France; for so long as there existed anywhere an imposing body of soldiery, it was not alone the fall of Napoleon, but that of France, that might be ameliorated by negotiation: a trust, in short, which, like that of every soldier, should be sacred until he was relieved from it.

No doubt, a soldier does not cease to be a citizen because he is a soldier, nor lose the right of interfering in the political interests of his country because he sheds his blood for her. Marmont might have gone to Napoleon at Fontainebleau, forced an entrance into his palace and into his heart, appealed to him in the name of France, implored him not to injure her further, but to yield the country to the Bourbons, who were more capable than he of reconciling it with Europe and restoring its liberty; he could have said all these things, if he believed them; and if he were not listened to, he could resign his sword, and with it his post, to Napoleon, and then betake himself to the provisional government, taking with him a thing of great value, and of which he could dispose without ingratitude—his example. Gratitude may check personal interest, but cannot shackle duty. To deliver surreptitiously the possession on the Essonne to the enemy without the preliminaries we have mentioned was simply treason.

And yet Marmont had not the soul of a traitor, far from it; but he was weak, vain, and ambitious, and unfortunately, such failings are sufficient, under circumstances of great importance, to lead to acts that posterity stamps with reprobation. Marmont heard with pleasure the praises bestowed upon his military and political talents, the personal importance that he might acquire, and the services he could render, and yielding to the deceitful bait of perhaps holding a position in the State equal to M. de Talleyrand's, he consented to treat with Prince Schwarzenberg, who for that purpose had come to Petit-Bourg. The following conditions were decided on, after many discussions. Marmont, with his *corps d'armée*, was on the following day to leave the Essonne, and advance along the Normandy route, where he was to place himself at the disposal of the provisional government, and as he could not conceal from himself the consequences of such an act—for he not only deprived Napoleon of a third of his army, but of the important post of the Essonne—he stipulated that, should Napoleon, in consequence of his desertion, fall into the hands of the allied sovereigns, they would respect his life, liberty, and past grandeur, and procure him a retreat at once suitable and safe. This single proviso, dictated by an honourable repentance, condemns the conduct of Marmont, in proving the importance which he himself attached to his treason.

These conditions, reduced to writing, were sent to Prince Schwarzenberg. But it was not sufficient to be seduced himself; it was necessary that Marmont should gain over the generals under him, for without their concurrence, it would be difficult to complete the stipulated arrangements. It was not a difficult task to win them, for they knew nothing, or almost nothing, of the general position of the army; nor did they know whether it was possible or not by a last battle to wrest France from the hands of the coalition; they only thought, what every one thought then, that Napoleon, having already caused the destruction of the greater part of his army, was now in his obstinacy about to expose the remainder to be slaughtered. Marmont, profiting of this state of opinion, told them how Napoleon, after committing fault upon fault, and permitting the allies to enter Paris, was now mad enough to think of attacking 200,000 men with his 50,000, and thus risk the utter annihilation of the remnant of his army, and by fighting in the capital itself, prepare them a tomb amidst the ruins of Paris and of France. There was doubtless a great deal of truth in what he said, and what could the generals reply to the images he conjured up? They said that it would not be right to follow Napoleon in this last extravagant adventure; that it was their duty to put an end to the misfortunes of France themselves. They promised, therefore, to follow Marmont to Versailles as soon as he should give the order. In their opinion this determination, which by the sequel has proved to be a defection, was but a necessary and legitimate separation from a madman.

Such was the entanglement in which the marshals found Marmont when they arrived at Essonne. At first he would not enter into any explanation, and only made weak excuses when they pressed him to accompany them to Paris. But as his mind was as incapable of concealing treason as inventing it, he finished by telling Macdonald and Caulaincourt all that had passed, at the same time palliating his own conduct as much as possible by relating all the motives that had influenced him, and which, if the truth must be told, were much the same as the marshals had used to induce Napoleon to abdicate. Macdonald blamed him very much for what he had done, and took great pains to impress on him that the best way to repair his fault would be to revoke his engagement with Prince Schwarzenberg, justifying his conduct on Napoleon's conditional abdication, a sacrifice that made it a point of honour to defend the rights of his son; and after this he should go to Paris to plead the cause of the King of Rome before the allied sovereigns. Marmont, without attempting to controvert this reasoning, appeared, however, unwilling to adopt a line of conduct that would be in direct contradiction to his former act.

He was strangely perplexed. At one moment he felt inclined to go to Fontainebleau, tell Napoleon all that he had done, and implore his forgiveness; but either from shame or fear, this better feeling passed away, and he determined to adopt Macdonald's advice—to retract his engagement with Prince Schwarzenberg, and then go with the others to Paris, to support the King of Rome's cause, taking care to suspend until his return all movement in his *corps d'armée.*

Accordingly he summoned his generals, told them of the new state of things, of Napoleon's conditional abdication, and the negotiations that were about to commence in consequence, and arranged with them that nothing was to be done until they should receive fresh orders from him. He then rejoined M. de Caulaincourt and the marshals, and permission to pass the outposts having arrived, he followed them to Petit-Bourg. He would not enter at the same time as they, under pretext of having a private interview with Prince Schwarzenberg before taking part in the general conferences. When M. de Caulaincourt and the marshals had been admitted into the chateau, they had some very lively altercations, first with Prince Schwarzenberg, who sustained, with imperturbable calmness, the cool policy of the Austrian cabinet, and afterwards with the Prince-Royal of Wurtemberg, who spoke in the harshest manner both of Napoleon and France. This prince had served formerly under Marshal Ney, who had never shown him much favour, and who now told him, with great haughtiness, that if any court in Europe had lost the right of blaming the ambition of France, it was most certainly that of Wurtemberg. They were engaged in these disagreeable recriminations when the permission to enter Paris, demanded by Napoleon's representatives, arrived.

They left immediately, and outside the chateau met Marmont, who was waiting for them, indebted, as he said, to Prince Schwarzenberg's honour for the revocation of his promise. But notwithstanding this assertion on his part, there is every reason to believe that the prince only gave him a temporary release from his engagement, merely during negotiations, whose success he felt to be impossible, and on condition of fulfilling his promise should the negotiations fail. The fact that the allies immediately announced the convention signed by Marshal Marmont proves that this was the case.

M. de Caulaincourt and the marshals arrived at the Hôtel Talleyrand between one and two in the morning. Great was the excitement amongst the crowd of interested or curious persons who day and night surrounded the doors of the provisional government, when it was known that these men were come to offer that Napoleon should abdicate in favour of the King of Rome and Marie Louise, and that they were about to

support this negotiation with all the authority of the army. Terrific was the idea of Napoleon acting under the names of his wife and son, and dealing forth vengeance on those who had abandoned him. The number of the royalists had increased greatly since the publication of the deposition, on the evening of the 2nd April, some gradually feeling emboldened to express openly sentiments they had always cherished in their hearts; while others became converts to royalty, when they perceived it to be the road to success. The number of the compromised and the anxious had consequently been considerably augmented, and so great was the alarm excited, that M. de Talleyrand—the most deeply compromised of all—asked himself whether it were not better to pause in a course where he had taken so many steps that might be deemed irrevocable.

In fact, worried by M. de Vitrolles, who insisted, as we have said, on the immediate and unconditional admission of the Count d'Artois into Paris, M. de Talleyrand was considering these questions, and actually about to give a letter for the prince to M. de Vitrolles when the marshals were announced.

Alarmed at this unexpected arrival, he withheld the letter, and requested M. de Vitrolles to wait until every doubt should be removed, to which the latter consented, as he did not wish to rejoin the prince until he should be able to bring him certain and definite information.

The first interview M. de Caulaincourt and the marshals had with the members of the provisional government was short and cold, and might have become stormy, but that the question under discussion was to be decided elsewhere.

The night was far advanced, and the King of Prussia had retired to the mansion in which he had taken up his residence; but the Emperor Alexander, being in the Hôtel Talleyrand, received the envoys of Napoleon at once. Talleyrand, fearing the mobility of this prince, and the influence that the new arrivals might have on him, endeavoured to fix more firmly in his mind the ideas that he had already instilled into it, representing to him that Napoleon, the personification of war, could no longer be thought of; that Marie Louise was only Napoleon under another name; that it would be ridiculous to think of Bernadotte, and that, all things considered, the Bourbons alone were admissible; and besides that, during the last five days every public proceeding had been influenced by this opinion; and that common sense as well as honour required that they should not abandon men who had compromised themselves on the faith of the allied sovereigns, in whose honour and power they were justified in believing. Not satisfied with these precautions, M. de Talleyrand placed near Alexander, as a kind of guardian, M. de Dessoles, a man, as we have said before, of

great firmness of mind, who favoured the Bourbons from conviction and not from interest, and who was capable of asserting his opinion against every possible contradiction. Though he did not possess the same right as Marshals Ney and Macdonald to speak in the name of the army, he had some claim to reply to those who, in representing its opinions, did not confine themselves to the exact truth.

Alexander received M. de Caulaincourt and the marshals with that courtesy that was natural to him, and which he never more willingly exercised than towards the military men of France. Having complimented them on the prowess they had shown during the last campaign, and the heroic devotion with which they had fulfilled their military duties, he added, that these duties being now accomplished, it was time to choose between the welfare of their country and that of an individual, and retracing, as he often did, the origin of the present war as far back as 1812, he asserted that it was Napoleon alone who had provoked it. He said that in 1809, 1810, and 1811, Russia had patiently borne all the expenses of the alliance, and in conformity with Napoleon's political plans against England, had almost totally deprived her subjects of the advantages of commerce, when Napoleon, as inconstant as he was despotic, invented a new commercial legislation, and proposed imposing it on his allies; and that when he (Alexander) had made him the most reasonable and friendly representations on this subject, and was about to yield to these demands, notwithstanding their injustice, Napoleon suddenly invaded his dominions, and forced him to take up arms in his defence; that, aided by the severity of the climate and the courage of his army, he had repelled the invader, and would have stopped short on the Vistula, but that oppressed Europe had implored his assistance; that after the battles of Lutzen and Bautzen the allied sovereigns wished to come to terms with Napoleon, offering to allow him to retain his immense conquests, and only seeking to lighten the yoke that pressed upon them, but he distinctly refused; that again on the Rhine they stopped, and offered him that beautiful river as a frontier, but he did not reply; that at Chatillon they had offered him France, such as it was in the days of Louis XIV. and XV., but that he had again refused, and they were obliged to come to seek in Paris that peace which they could not find elsewhere; that having entered Paris, they had no idea of humbling France, or imposing a government on her; that they were seeking in all sincerity to discover who France really desired, who, in assuring her happiness, would secure the peace of Europe; that they had not entered into any compact with the Bourbons, and that if they were inclined to favour them, it was more from necessity than choice; and that so great was

their deference for the opinion of the French nation, they were quite ready to adopt the government that the deputies of the army who were now present should propose, provided that government was consistent with the tranquillity of Europe. Then, redoubling his flatteries to them, Alexander added—

"And, gentlemen, arrange the matter between yourselves—adopt what constitution you please, choose the chief that will best suit this constitution, and should it be from amongst yourselves, who possess so many claims, both from your services and your glory, that this new sovereign will be chosen, we most willingly consent, and shall recognise him with pleasure, provided he neither threatens our peace or independence."

Marshal Ney, whose natural impetuosity always impelled him to take the lead, hastened to reply to the courteous address of the czar, and entering rather too much into his views, said, that they had suffered more than any one else from the incessant wars of which Europe complained, that they had been the first victims of this despotic ruler, as was testified by the bodies of their companions in arms strewn all over the continent, and none could desire his removal from the throne more warmly than they. There may have been much truth, but certainly very little tact in this reply, which was ill calculated to influence the allies, whose plans could only be modified by exaggerating the devotion of the army to Napoleon. It produced an evident impression on Alexander, which the companions of the too impetuous marshal perceived to their great regret. Then continuing his discourse, and replying to Alexander's flattering hint of choosing a candidate from amongst themselves, a hint which, had it been serious, could only have referred to Bernadotte, he insinuated that amongst military men only one had attained a position that could entitle him to rule, and that he, forsaken by fortune, had, by his abdication, renounced his claim; after him, no soldier could entertain such pretensions; that the only one who could or would perhaps dare to think of it would be, covered as he was with French blood, abhorrent to the nation; that therefore, Napoleon's son, under the regency of his mother, was the only form of government that could be offered to France and the army.

This proposal once made, Ney and Macdonald successively defended the cause of the King of Rome with a vehemence and eloquence peculiarly military. They exclaimed against the recall of the Bourbons, and proceeded to demonstrate the difficulty of getting them accepted by this young France, that was not acquainted with them, and the great difficulty of making them accept this France, which they did not under-

stand, and the probable consequence of seeing arise between the throne and the people an opposition of sentiments that would lead to painful consequences, and destroy those hopes of peace which Europe founded on the restoration of the ancient dynasty. They then sought to impress on Alexander the necessity of leaving new generations under a government of the same nature as themselves, and composed of men who had administered public affairs during the last twenty years, men who detested, as much as Europe herself, the system of continual warfare, of which they had borne all the burden, and besides, would have at their head a princess whom the allies could not distrust, since she was the daughter of one of themselves. Then speaking for the army in particular, the marshals said that something was due to men who, during twenty years, had been pouring out their blood for France, and were still ready to shed the last drop again if necessary—men who alone, at this moment, were able to check the desperation of Napoleon, and to whom it was at least due to place them under the authority of the son of their general, to whom they had devoted their lives, and who, during twenty years, had led them to victory, and not under the government of princes who would detest while they flattered them.

Considerations expressed with so much warmth did not fail to produce a visible effect on Alexander. He sought, by opposing the opinions of the marshals, rather to induce them to give expression to what they thought, than to contradict them; he cited the recent acts of the Senate, pointed out all that had been done towards the resotration of the ancient dynasty, and observed, the most esteemed men of the Revolution and the empire had unhesitatingly declared in favour of the restoration.

The mere mention of the Senate roused the anger of Ney. "That despicable Senate," he cried, "that might have spared us so many afflictions by opposing some resistance to Napoleon's passion for conquest; that despicable Senate, always ready to obey the wishes of the man they now call a tyrant—by what right do they raise their voice at this moment? These men were mute when they ought to have spoken, and how dare they presume to speak now when they ought to observe silence? Most of these gentlemen of the Senate enjoyed their emoluments whilst we were bedewing Europe with our blood. It is not they that have a right to complain of the imperial sway, but we soldiers, who have borne all its rigours; but if in defiance of all justice they pretend to claim authority now, bring them face to face with us, and you will see, sire, whether they will dare to speak in our presence."

Alexander was so much influenced by this discourse, that he

was about to consent to a conference between the marshals and some of the principal senators, when General Dessoles, seeing what ground had been already lost, interfered with vehemence, and indeed with a certain rudeness. He was interrupted several times, and the debate became confused and violent, when Dessoles, seeing himself alone and unsupported, appealed to the honour of Alexander, saying that too much had been already done towards the recall of the Bourbons to recede now; and that a number of honest men, relying on the good faith of the allied sovereigns, had already compromised themselves, whom it would be dishonourable to desert.

This argument, true, though somewhat egotistical, and which had been already adduced by M. de Talleyrand, was ill suited to the noble character of General Dessoles, who was entirely guided by disinterested convictions. It was, besides, not a little offensive to Alexander, who replied with pride that no person should ever have to regret confidence placed in him or his allies, but that here they must be guided by higher considerations than the interests of individuals, when the welfare, not alone of France, but of all Europe, was at stake. Then putting an end to an interview that had lasted nearly all night, he graciously dismissed the marshals, remarking that he alone of the allied sovereigns was present, and appointing them an interview for the next day, when he would inform them of the decision of the allies.

Although so much had been already done towards the restoration of the Bourbons, there was still some hope for Marie Louise and the King of Rome; but the marshals, overrating the chances in their favour, left the Hôtel Talleyrand with greater confidence of ultimate success than they had reason to entertain. Alexander had heard them with so much politeness, had treated them with so much attention, nay, respect, that, still excited by the discussion they had had, they left him in the highest spirits, and finding in the ante-chamber numbers of persons who had formerly crowded the ante-chambers of Napoleon, they could not restrain their anger, though they were in a short time to exhibit in their own persons a spectacle which now shocked them so much in others. They immediately renewed their discussion with the members of the provisional government, and in truth, in far less measured terms than with Alexander. General Beurnonville was about to address Macdonald, when the marshal repelled him, saying, "Begone! your conduct has obliterated a friendship of twenty years' duration." Afterwards meeting General Dupont, Macdonald said to him—"It is very possible, general, that you have been treated with injustice and even cruelty, but you have very badly chosen both the time and manner of avenging yourself." Marshal Ney was

equally unreserved in the expression of his sentiments, and some disagreeable scenes might have taken place, had not M. de Talleyrand reminded them that it would be disrespectful to the Emperor of Russia to continue such discussions in his apartments, and then invited them to come down to that part of the mansion occupied by him, where they would be in the apartments of the provisional government. "We don't acknowledge your provisional government, and have nothing to say to it," replied Macdonald, and left the house abruptly with his colleagues.

Napoleon's negotiators went immediately to Marshal Ney's house to pass the rest of the night, and await the reply of the allied sovereigns, which they were to receive in the course of the morning.

Whilst this important question, with all its chances of success or defeat, was under discussion in the Hôtel Rue St. Florentin, it was very quickly decided elsewhere, not by reasons true or false, but by treachery, the worst of all arguments. Napoleon, as we have seen, attached very little importance to the negotiations undertaken by the marshals, and was solely occupied with his project of crossing the Essonne, with the 70,000 men he still had, and of either overwhelming the allies, or perishing with them amidst the ruins of Paris. He sent for Marmont, who commanded the division on the Essonne, in order to give him his last instructions; and foreseeing that Marmont might have accompanied the marshals to Paris, he ordered that in his absence the general left in command should immediately repair to Fontainebleau.

This commission was confided to Colonel Gourgaud. This officer, brave and devoted, but who did not always transmit the emperor's orders in the spirit in which they were given, appeared surprised not to find Marmont at his post, and asked in an almost menacing tone for the officer left in command. From his manner one would suppose that he was the representative of an irritated master, who was aware of what had taken place between Marmont and Prince Schwarzenberg at Petit-Bourg. But it was nothing of the kind. Napoleon and Gourgaud were wholly ignorant of the matter, and the latter, speaking with the harshness habitual to the members of the imperial staff, decided, without intending it, an event of the last importance. Napoleon now experienced in a most painful manner that there are times when fate, that once seemed to turn our very mistakes to our advantage, suddenly changing her plan, punishes us even for the faults of others.

It was old General Souham that was in command during the absence of Marmont. Colonel Gourgaud spoke to him in the same haughty tone, as well as to the Generals Compans,

Bordessoulle, and Meynadier; and to add to this unfortunate complication, a written order arrived at the same moment, directed to General Souham, commanding him to repair immediately to Fontainebleau. This was the usual practice in the imperial staff, that a verbal order from the emperor should be followed by a written one; but old Souham, struck by Colonel Gourgaud's manner, and made suspicious by a consciousness of guilt, forgot this, and immediately conceived the most alarming apprehensions. He thought that Napoleon had discovered everything—not alone the secret convention between Marmont and Prince Schwarzenberg, but also its approval by the generals of division of the sixth corps, and he believed they were summoned to Fontainebleau to be arrested, or perhaps shot. General Souham was a general of the Revolution, an excellent soldier, an old friend of Moreau's, entertaining for Napoleon the same concealed hatred as the other generals of the Rhine army, and complaining, like Vandamme, and with as good reason, of not having been created marshal. He was still a republican in his heart, and sufficiently accustomed to revolutionary proceedings to believe Napoleon capable of the most violent measures. He immediately assembled his colleagues, Generals Compans, Bordessoulle, and Meynadier, and said it was quite evident that Napoleon knew what had occurred, and that they were now summoned to his presence to be shot, a finale for which, he assured them, he had not the least desire. The other generals declared that they were no more ambitious of such an end than he; and after some objections that were silenced by repeating that Napoleon knew all, they consented to Souham's proposal, which was, not to await the return of Marshal Marmont, but conclude themselves the treaty entered into with Prince Schwarzenberg, and crossing the Essonne, place themselves under the orders of the provisional government. So impressed was Souham with the idea of the emperor's desire to secure his person, that he stationed a cavalry picket on the road to Fontainebleau, with orders to arrest the first officer of Napoleon's staff that should appear, in case Napoleon, in his anxiety to be obeyed, should despatch another messenger.

Colonel Fabvier, of Marmont's staff, was sincerely afflicted by these headlong resolutions, and endeavoured to calm Souham, by showing him that he exaggerated the danger of his situation, and that, besides, the precautions he had just taken, of guarding the Fontainebleau route, ought to tranquillise him; and in addition to this, he need only cross to the other side of the Essonne to be ready to escape at the first signal of danger, but that by commanding the troops to pass the river, he would merit, and perhaps incur, the punishment that he dreaded now

without cause. But nothing could calm his excitement; and persisting in his error, he replied to the excellent reasons of Colonel Fabvier, with the vulgar adage to the soldiery—"*It is better to kill the devil than be killed by him.*" He consequently persisted in his error.

Under the influence of this fatal delusion the generals of division of the sixth corps informed Prince Schwarzenberg, or those who represented him, of the movement they were about to make, and fearing strong opposition from the troops, they ordered that all the regimental officers, from the colonels to the sub-lieutenants, should march with their men to their posts, lest the officers, assembling together, should communicate their suspicions to each other, and divining the plans of their superiors, should rise against them.

These precautions being taken, the sixth corps, conducted by its generals, crossed the Essonne at four o'clock on the morning of the 5th of April, whilst the marshals were in conference in the Rue St. Florentin. The troops advanced in silence towards the outposts of the enemy. The soldiers obeyed, ignorant of the crime they were unconsciously committing; some supposing the movement was a consequence of the abdication, of which they had heard the evening before, whilst others thought it was a concerted movement to surprise the enemy. However, when they perceived that the allied troops remained peaceably on the roadside, and allowed them to pass without firing, they began to conceive some suspicions, which were soon changed into murmurs. Some officers, accomplices in the treason, tried to pacify them by various pretexts, and induce them to continue their march. But the murmurs increased at every step, and everything seemed to announce an outbreak when they should arrive at Versailles. Thus the sixth corps passed over to the enemy, with the exception of the division commanded by General Lucotte, who suspected that something was wrong, and refused to obey the order to march. The line of the Essonne was thus left unprotected, and the sixth corps, so necessary for the execution of his projects, was totally lost to Napoleon.

The brave Colonel Fabvier, not being able to prevent this terrible resolve, had no other resource than to endeavour to anticipate its effects by hastening to visit Marshal Marmont at Paris; but unfurnished with credentials, he found great difficulty in passing the enemy's outposts, and only succeeded by dint of solicitations and false pretences. He arrived at length at the Talleyrand Hôtel, but not meeting there the chief he sought, he hastened to Marshal Ney's, where he found the three marshals together, and informed Marmont of what we have just related.

On receiving this terrible information, Marmont experienced

violent emotion. "I am lost!" he exclaimed, "dishonoured for ever." Unfortunate man, he was not sufficiently convinced of the truth of what he said, or he would have made a last effort to escape all share in the responsibility of this defection. But he contented himself with lamenting, complaining, and asking consolation from his colleagues (very little disposed to offer him any), instead of going in person to Versailles, and bringing back the troops to their posts at any risk. Whilst he was consuming the time in useless bewailings, a messenger from the Emperor of Russia announced to Napoleon's representatives that they were waited for at Rue St. Florentin. They set off, followed by Marmont, who still continued his useless lamentations, without proceeding to act. The marshals had lost all hope since learning the late intelligence that had confounded them.

Whilst this scene was taking place on the Versailles route, the authors of the restoration of the Bourbons had been very busy. The Emperor Alexander had appeared so moved by the language of the marshals, and the allies themselves, though naturally inclined to favour the Bourbons, had appeared so sensible to the advantages of immediately finishing the war by coming to terms with Napoleon, that the royalists, assembled at M. de Talleyrand's, became terribly alarmed. They repeated to the Emperor Alexander all they had so often told him during the past five days; they despatched General Beurnonville to the King of Prussia, to repeat the same things to him; there was no occasion to try fresh persuasions with Prince Schwarzenberg, but they begged him not to waver. In a word, they neglected no means to prevent a change of fortune in Napoleon's favour, a change that depended solely on the versatile will of Alexander. As to the rest, these efforts were nearly superfluous, for there was no occasion for using any argument with the allied powers to show them that the Bourbons were much better than Napoleon acting under the shelter of his wife's regency; but the allies dreaded to drive Napoleon to despair, and this was the only motive that could make them hesitate. However, after having assembled at the Hôtel St. Florentin, and after having deliberated, the representatives of the coalition determined to persevere—in the first place, because they had already gone very far in pronouncing the deposition of Napoleon and his heirs; and secondly, because the Bourbons were much more satisfactory for them than a regency, which would leave Napoleon the temptation and the means of resuming the sceptre, and with the sceptre the sword; and lastly, because the work of throwing off the common oppressor was so far advanced that it was better to finish, even at the risk of another effusion of blood, than to abandon the nearly completed

task. The representatives of the allied powers therefore commissioned Alexander to declare that they still persisted in what they had originally resolved, and this they did without infusing into his mind an energy which they did not themselves possess, or without inspiring him with a zeal for the Bourbons, in which they were deficient.

Alexander, surrounded by the King of Prussia and the allied ministers, received the marshals, presented by M. de Caulaincourt, with the same affability as on the previous evening. He expressed once more the sentiments, repeated to satiety during the last few days, that the allied sovereigns had come to Paris to seek peace, and not by any means to humble France, or impose a government on her; then he repeated, in a formal and determined manner, the reasons already quoted against maintaining Napoleon on the throne of France; but he mentioned, in a manner much less positive, the reasons that might be alleged against the regency of Marie Louise. He spoke on the latter part of the subject in a manner somewhat vague, and which left an opening to the renewal of the discussion. The question was, in fact, again opened; the marshals repeated, with extreme vehemence, what they had already said against the recall of the Bourbons, and almost assumed a threatening attitude in speaking of the forces that Napoleon still commanded, and of the devotedness he would find them testify in defending the rights of the King of Rome. Alexander, visibly perplexed, looked now at the speakers, then at his allies, as if he were thinking of a solution different to that he had been commissioned to announce,* when an aide-de-camp suddenly enters, and addressing the emperor in a low voice, says something in Russian. M. de Caulaincourt, who has a slight knowledge of this language, thinks, from what he overhears, that the czar is informed of the defection of the 6th corps, of which Alexander was evidently ignorant, as his surprise testified. "The entire corps," said the emperor, inclining his ear, for he was a little deaf. "Yes, the entire corps," replied the aide-de-camp.

Alexander returned to the negotiators, but with an absent air, and scarcely appearing to hear what was said. He afterwards withdrew for a moment to converse with his allies. Whilst the three negotiators were alone (Marmont had not dared to accompany them this time), M. de Caulaincourt told the two marshals that all was lost, for he had not the slightest doubt that the intelligence just brought to the Emperor Alexander was the defection of the 6th corps, and this information would entirely change the dispositions of the czar.

* I speak on the written authority of men the most worthy of belief, and the least hostile to Marshal Marmont and the Bourbons.

Alexander soon returned; but now firm in his attitude, decided in his language, he declared that both Napoleon and Marie Louise should be given up, and that the Bourbons alone suited France as well as Europe; and as to the rest, the army, in whose name they spoke, was at least divided, for he had just learned that an entire corps had passed over to the provisional government; that the entire army would undoubtedly follow this good example, and would, by so doing, render France a service at least equal to those her soldiers had already rendered; that her glory and her interests would be carefully respected; that the princes now called to the throne would look to the army as their support and their guide; that as to what concerned Napoleon, he had only to trust to the honour of the allied sovereigns, and that both he and his family would be treated in a manner conformable to their past greatness. Having spoken thus, Alexander conversed with the marshals in succession; he treated Macdonald with the esteem that was his due; he flattered Ney in a way to turn the head, unfortunately weak, of this hero; he detained M. de Caulaincourt some minutes. Then, in a short conversation, he signified to the latter that the late vacillations of the allies had been terminated by the occurrence of the past night on the Essonne, for from that moment the allies saw clearly that Napoleon could make no further efforts, and that he must submit to his fate. The Emperor Alexander renewed the assurance he had already given, of the most generous treatment for Napoleon; he did not deny that he had perhaps gone too far in offering the island of Elba, but he added that he would keep his word, and promised formally to obtain a principality in Italy for Marie Louise and the King of Rome. He then dismissed M. de Caulaincourt, pressing him to return soon, furnished with powers from his master to conclude this negotiation, for Napoleon's cause was every hour losing what that of the Bourbons was gaining, and the indemnifications that the allies were disposed to make would diminish in the same proportion.

M. de Caulaincourt, left alone with Macdonald, who had not quitted him, prepared to return to Fontainebleau. Ney, surrounded by the members and ministers of the provisional government, was overwhelmed with attentions, capable of shaking a firmer head than his. Marshal Marmont had gone to M. de Talleyrand's, where he was exposed to fresh seductions. He arrived there, confounded with what had taken place on the Essonne, and expecting to find in the looks of the bystanders a judgment that he feared would be severe, especially when he remembered what the marshals, his colleagues, had said in the morning; but instead of expressions condemnatory or even equivocal, he met on all sides the most flattering approval, and

the most expressive pressures of the hand. He was told, that after having heroically done his duty in the last campaign, he had put the acme to his noble conduct in saving France by the determination he had taken; that there was no price too high for such a service, and that the Bourbons would be eager to acquit the debt, however great the amount. The unfortunate Marmont was at first about to protest against the suppositious merits that were attributed to him, but, assailed by felicitations, he had not strength of mind sufficient to repulse such honours, so many brilliant hopes, and without suspecting, without wishing it, in accepting these compliments he accepted the reprobation which is for ever inseparably attached to his memory.

In times of revolution, vicissitudes of fortune are sudden and unforeseen. Whilst the frequenters of the Talleyrand mansion, delighted to learn the defection of the sixth corps, and the definite resolutions of the allies, were overloading Marmont with compliments, and thus endeavouring to associate him with their joys and their hopes, a piece of intelligence suddenly damped their exultation. A report was spread that a military sedition had burst out at Versailles amongst the soldiers of the sixth corps; that these soldiers declared themselves deceived by their generals, whom they threatened to shoot; and in short, there was no saying what might be the consequences of this accident. Had the royalists preserved a coolness, which indeed is seldom exhibited under such circumstances, they ought to have known that a corps of 15,000 men, separated from the main body of the French army, and completely surrounded by the allied troops, would be annihilated or disarmed, had they attempted to undo what they had done. But people do not reason so logically during the tumult of revolution. It was feared that this corps, repenting in a burst of heroic despair, might re-kindle the passions of the troops still remaining at Fontainebleau, as well as the warlike ardour of Napoleon, which would excite the Parisians, who, though apparently so tranquil, were impatient of the presence of strangers, and so effect a complete change in the aspect of affairs. The royalists were exceedingly alarmed.

There was only one man who could hinder the fortunate event of the past night becoming so suddenly disastrous: this man was Marshal Marmont. This marshal ought naturally to have great influence over the troops of the sixth corps, and be more capable than any other person of keeping them in the way in which they had entered. The royalists surrounded the marshal, and begged him to finish the work he had begun. They told him for the hundredth time that the re-establishment of Napoleon, in opposition to all Europe, was impossible; that the European powers, even if conquered before the walls of

Paris, would not consider themselves defeated, but would renew the war with fresh vigour; that France would be consequently exposed to a frightful prolongation of evils; that peace, with the frontiers of 1790—that the Bourbons, with legal guarantees—would be preferable to such risks; that, moreover, he, Marmont, having taken one decided step, having brought away his *corps d'armée*, it was now impossible for him to retrace his steps, his conduct would be inexplicable, and being already compromised with Napoleon, he would then be irrevocably compromised with the Bourbons.

Marmont did not wish to be compromised with everybody, and besides, after having had the weakness to accept unmerited congratulations, he wished to aquire incontestable titles to royal favour; he therefore resolved to set off for Versailles, and win back the mutinous troops of the sixth corps. On arriving, he found the soldiers in open insurrection assembled outside the town, and refusing to return to their ranks, notwithstanding the efforts of General Bordessoulle, whom they bitterly reproached for what they had been induced to do. The unexpected arrival of Marshal Marmont caused the soldiers evident satisfaction. As he was absent at the moment when the defection took place, they supposed it was accomplished without his concurrence; and seeing him now arrive, they were persuaded he had come to extricate them from the consequences of the false step they had made. Besides, Marmont had won their sympathies by his brilliant bravery in the last campaign. He presented himself before them, appealed to their recollections, retraced the perilous circumstances in which he had commanded them, and where he was always foremost in the fight. Having thus awakened their acclamations, and proved his claim to their confidence, he said, that having always led them in the path of honour, he would continue to guide them in the same way still when the road would be clear before them, but disturbed as their spirits now were, they could only be the instruments of disorder, destined to be conquered by the first enemy they should meet; he therefore implored them to return to their duty, and take their places again under their chiefs, promising, when they should have again become a real army, he would return amongst them, and remain with them until France should have passed through the present fearful crisis.

Marmont said no more, and the soldiers attributed his reserve to the vicinity of the enemy, by whom they were surrounded on all sides; they became calm, fell into rank, and appeared inclined to await patiently the part their marshal should appoint them to take. As to the rest, a few moments' submission was sufficient to prove that there was nothing more to be feared from their mutiny. The allies were naturally anxious to place

between the sixth corps and Fontainebleau an impassable barrier.

Marmont returned immediately to Paris, to announce the successful result of his short mission, to receive the flatteries of the Rue St. Florentin mansion, that had destroyed him, and of which he was no longer independent. He was again surrounded by royalists, overloaded with flatteries greater than he had yet received, and promises of eternal gratitude,—which on the part of peoples and kings is not always assured even to services the purest and most honourable.

Thus was this defection, commonly called Marshal Marmont's treason, accomplished. If the act of this marshal had consisted in preferring the Bourbons to Napoleon, peace to war, the hope of liberty to despotism, nothing could have been more simple, more legitimate, more avowable; but setting aside all the duties of gratitude, we cannot forget that Marmont possessed at that time the personal confidence of Napoleon, that he was under arms, and occupied on the Essonne a post of great importance; to abandon this position at such a moment with his entire *corps d'armée*, in consequence of a secret convention with Prince Schwarzenberg, was not acting like a citizen, free to choose between one government and another—it was playing the part of a soldier who deserts to the enemy. Marmont has since asserted that this deplorable act had but one part, and it is true that after having himself planned and accomplished the commencement, his generals, misled by a false terror, resumed the interrupted act, and completed it on their own responsibility; but Marmont, appropriating the termination to himself by his conduct at Versailles, assumed the entire responsibility, and loaded with this heavy burden, his memory will descend to posterity.

The commotion at Fontainebleau was quite as great, but of a different nature. The three plenipotentiaries returned thither towards the evening of the 5th, to deliver the definite reply of the allied sovereigns. Marshal Ney, overloaded with caresses by the provisional government, had undertaken to obtain and bring back Napoleon's abdication *pure et simple*. He had set off without his two colleagues, either through a wish to be alone, or through eagerness to keep his promise. He found Napoleon aware of the defection of the sixth corps, and appreciating better than any one the military and political consequences of the act; but as to the rest, calm, exhibiting a haughtiness inversely proportionate to his fortunes, and by no means disposed to reveal his feelings, except to the two or three who exclusively possessed his confidence. Napoleon thanked Marshal Ney politely for having fulfilled his mission, but exhibited no inclination to make him his confidant, or take him into his counsels, for

Napoleon divined from the marshal's eagerness to arrive first that he was anxious to contribute to the *dénouement*, and perhaps arrogate the merit to himself. The emperor listened almost without reply to all the marshal said; and indeed, the latter expatiated at considerable length on the irrevocable determination of the allied sovereigns, on the impossibility of inducing them to change, on the kind of fascination with which the Parisians spoke of peace, and the Bourbons on the dismemberment of the army, and the impossibility of inducing the military to make fresh efforts, and àpropos of the blood shed by these soldiers, he spoke of existing misfortunes with truth, but without consideration for the feelings of the emperor, for his warrior soul was more strong than tender. However, Ney did not for a moment forget the respect due to a master under whose rule both he and his companions in arms had acquired the habit of profound submission.* Napoleon, after having listened coolly and patiently to the marshal, told him he would think over the matter, and let him know next day his determination. After this interview, Marshal Ney, eager to fulfil his promise, wrote a letter to the Prince of Benevento, in which, relating his

* It is as difficult to know what passed in this interview as in the preceding, of which we have spoken. Marshal Ney has left no written record, and Napoleon, in his St. Helena Memoirs, through a feeling of respect for the misfortunes and bravery of the marshal, has observed a profound silence on the subject. But it is easy to perceive by some of his expressions that he was deeply sensible of the attitude assumed by the marshal during the last days of the empire. The marshal was wrong to boast, on his return to Paris, of having forced Napoleon to abdicate. That he did so to General Dupont, the war minister, is patent, for the latter has recorded the circumstance in his memoirs. Everything proves that on this occasion the marshal accuses himself without grounds, and that he had confined himself, in the scene at Fontainebleau, to a want of consideration for fallen greatness, without indulging in violence of language, which would have been scarcely possible. What induces us to adopt this opinion is, that M. de Caulaincourt, on arriving towards midnight, that is to say, some minutes after Ney's departure, found Napoleon perfectly calm, not exhibiting, either in gesture or language, any trace of the emotion which would naturally have remained after a violent scene, nor had he come to any determination. M. de Caulaincourt, in a written record, says positively, that in comparing what he had seen at Fontainebleau with what he heard a few days later touching Marshal Ney's conduct, he could not understand the reports that had been circulated, nor could he help thinking that Ney had been guilty of self-calumny. M. de Caulaincourt was certainly not pleased with either Marshal Ney's language or conduct at l'Hôtel St. Florentin, but he could not believe in the scenes of violence reported at Paris, and which many historians have since quoted. As to Marshal Macdonald, though in his manuscript memoirs he manifests his discontent at Marshal Ney's conduct, yet he relates the scenes in which he took part in a manner that entirely excludes the idea of Napoleon being subjected to violence. We cite these two eminent persons, the only ocular witnesses who have written the scenes of Fontainebleau in 1814, and the most credible amongst all who might have written them, the persons most likely to tell things exactly as they were. We flatter ourselves that we have, in this instance, as in every other, recorded the truth as closely as it could be ascertained, and we do not hesitate to assert that every recital that oversteps the limits within which we have confined ourselves are either utterly false or strangely exaggerated.

return to Fontainebleau, after the failure of the morning negotiations, "a failure," he wrote, "which was owing to *an unexpected event*" (the event of the Essonne), he added, "that the Emperor Napoleon, *convinced of the critical position in which he had placed France, and recognising the impossibility of saving her himself, he appeared decided to give in his abdication, pure et simple.*" After this assertion, which was at best premature, the marshal said he hoped to be the bearer of the authentic and formal act of abdication. The letter was dated Fontainebleau, half-past eleven in the evening.

M. de Caulaincourt and Marshal Macdonald arrived immediately after Marshal Ney. They found Napoleon already sound asleep, and after waking him, they related as minutely as Marshal Ney, but in different terms, all that had taken place at Paris since the previous evening, that is to say, their negotiations, at first successful, at least in appearance, but followed by a complete failure after the defection of the 6th corps. They did not conceal from Napoleon that their intimate conviction, however painful it might be to declare it, was that there was no other course left for him than to abdicate unconditionally, if he did not wish to render his personal position still worse, and deprive his wife, his son, and his brothers of every chance of a suitable appanage, and entail on France new and irremediable misfortunes. This advice, repeated so soon again, though now in the most respectful terms, annoyed Napoleon. He replied with a kind of impatience that he had still too many resources to accept such a proposition. "And Eugene," he cried, "Augereau, Suchet, Soult, and the fifty thousand men I have here—do you think these are nothing? As to the rest, we shall see. Farewell till to-morrow." Then intimating that it was late, he recommended his negotiators to take some repose, showing at the same time how highly he appreciated their generous and delicate-minded mode of action.

Hardly had he dismissed them than he recalled M. de Caulaincourt, whom he did not esteem more highly than Marshal Macdonald, but in whom he was accustomed to confide. Every trace of ill-humour had disappeared. Napoleon told M. de Caulaincourt how much he was pleased with the conduct of Marshal Macdonald, who, though so long antagonistic to him, acted in this trying moment like a devoted friend; he took an indulgent view of Marshal Ney's mobility; and speaking of the conduct of his lieutenants with a slightly disdainful gentleness, said to M. de Caulaincourt—"Ah! Caulaincourt, men, men! My marshals would blush to act as Marmont has done, for they express the strongest indignation at his conduct, but they are very sorry that he has so far outstripped them on the road to fortune. They would be very glad, without dishonouring them-

selves, to do as he has done, to acquire the same rights to the favour of the Bourbons. He afterwards spoke of Marmont with vexation, but without bitterness. "I treated him," he said, "as if he were my own child. I have often had to defend him against his colleagues, who did not appreciate his intellectual advantages, and who, judging him only by what he appears on the field of battle, made no account of his military talents. I created him marshal and duke through personal affection and regard for the recollections of childhood, and I may well say that I reckoned on his fidelity. He is, perhaps, the only man whose desertion I was not prepared for; but vanity, weakness of mind, and ambition have misled him. The unhappy man does not know what awaits him; his name will be for ever dishonoured. Believe me, I have no longer a thought about myself —my career is finished, or very nearly so. Besides, what desire could I now have to reign over hearts that have grown weary of me, and are eager to offer their allegiance to another? I think only of France, which it is frightful to leave in this state —clipped, crippled, after having had frontiers so vast! Oh, Caulaincourt, that is the most poignant of the many humiliations heaped on my head! Oh! if these dolts had not abandoned me, I would have rebuilt the fabric of her greatness; for, be assured, the allies, maintaining their actual position, having Paris behind them and me in front, would have been destroyed. Had they left Paris to escape the danger, they should never have entered it again. The very fact of their leaving the city at my approach would be in itself a signal defeat. That unfortunate Marmont has frustrated this glorious result. Ah, Caulaincourt, what joy it would have been to restore the greatness of France in a few hours! Now, what is to be done? I would have about 150,000 men, with those I have here, and the troops Eugène, Augereau, Suchet, and Soult could bring; but I would be obliged to retire behind the Loire, entice the enemy to follow, and thus extend indefinitely the ravages to which France has been too long exposed, and try the fidelity of many, who perhaps would not bear the test better than Marmont—and I should make all these efforts to prolong a reign which I clearly see is drawing to a close. I do not feel sufficient energy to make such efforts. Undoubtedly, in prolonging the war, we should find means of improving our position. I am informed on all sides that the peasants of Lorraine, Champagne, and Burgundy cut down isolated parties of the enemy. Within a short time the people will conceive a horror of the enemy; the Parisians will tire of Alexander's magnanimity. This prince is gracious in his manner—he pleases women; but so much graciousness in a conqueror soon becomes revolting to the national pride of the conquered. Moreover, the Bourbons are

coming, and who can foresee the consequences. To-day they reconcile France with Europe; but to-morrow in what state will she be in relation to herself? They represent external peace, but internal war. You will see what they will have done with the country in a year. They will not keep Talleyrand six months. There would be many chances of success in a prolonged struggle—chances both political and military—but at the price of fearful calamities. Besides, at this moment, something more is needed than myself. My name, my statue, my sword, all cause alarm. I must yield. I am going to recall the marshals, and you will see their delight when I extricate them from their difficulties, and authorise them to do as Marmont has done without compromising their honour."

This entire detachment from things, this indulgence towards individuals, resulted from the greatness of his mind, and was commensurate with the vastness of his errors. If his hard-working lieutenants were at length fatigued, it was because he had urged them to the verge of human capability, and was not able to estimate the exact measure of ordinary men or things. It was not they only who were fatigued, for so was the world at large, and their defection was a result of the nature of things. But after the commission of great faults, it becomes a mighty genius to acknowledge them, and this sentiment inspires an ennobling sense of justice and that loftiness of language that gives dignity to misfortune.

Napoleon spoke afterwards of the fate that awaited himself. He accepted the isle of Elba, and in everything that concerned himself personally was very easy to please. "You know," he said to M. de Caulaincourt, "that I do not want anything. I had saved 150 millions out of my civil list, which belongs to me as justly as the savings a clerk makes out of his salary belong to him. I have given everything to the army, and I do not regret it. Let my family have a proper maintenance, and I shall be content. As to my son, he will be an archduke, which will perhaps be better for him than the throne of France. Did he ascend that, would he be able to keep it? But I would wish Tuscany for him and his mother. They would be thus placed in the neighbourhood of the isle of Elba, and I should have the means of seeing them."

M. de Caulaincourt replied that the King of Rome would never obtain such a dotation, and that, thanks to Alexander, he would at most get Parma. "What," exclaimed Napoleon, "in exchange for the empire of France, not even Tuscany!" He submitted to the repeated affirmations of M. de Caulaincourt. After his son, he spoke of the Empress Josephine, of Prince Eugène, of Queen Hortense, and insisted that a proper provision should be made for them. "But," he said to M. de Caulaincourt,

"these things will be easily arranged; the allies would not be so mean as to dispute them. But the army, but France, it is about them especially I ought to think. Since I give up the throne, and that I do more, that I sheathe my sword, having still so many opportunities of using it, have I not a right to demand some compensation? Would not the allies extend the French frontiers, since this increase of strength to France would not be vested in my hands, but in those of the Bourbons? Could we not stipulate for the army, the maintenance of its privileges, such as grades, titles, dotations? Could we not, which would be so gratifying to the soldiers, conserve for them those three colours which they have carried with so much glory to every part of the civilised world? Since we yield without fighting, when it would be so easy for us to shed more blood, is something not due to us, especially as I, the sole object of the enemy's hate and fear, would not profit by the concession?

And expatiating on this theme, which lay so near his heart, Napoleon wished to make some stipulations for France and the army. M. de Caulaincourt tried to disabuse his mind on these subjects, pointing out to him that he would no longer be allowed to treat of these great and important interests; that the great principle being accepted, that of his deposition, the privilege of representing France and negotiating for her was transferred to the provisional government, and that what he said on the subject would not be listened to. "But," added Napoleon, "what strength has this provisional government, except what it receives from me, except what I give it by remaining here at Fontainebleau, with the débris of the army? When I shall have yielded, and the army with me, it will be powerless, it will command still less consideration than at present, and will be obliged to surrender at discretion.

Such was, in fact, the situation of affairs, it could not be better described; but he who deplored the public woe was himself the author of these calamities, and ought to submit like the rest of the world. M. de Caulaincourt did all in his power to make the emperor comprehend this, and persisted in bringing him back to what alone could henceforth concern him, that is to say, his personal interest and that of his family. The former master of the world, becoming impatient, exclaimed —"You wish, then, to bring me down to a discussion of these miserable pecuniary interests! It is unworthy of me. Do you arrange my family affairs, Caulaincourt. As to me, I do not want anything; let me have the pension of a retired officer, it will be enough!"

After these conversations, which occupied the night and morning of the 6th of April; after drawing up the definite act of abdication, on which he bestowed considerable care,

Napoleon recalled the marshals to acquaint them with his ultimate resolves. Being admitted to his presence, and not knowing to what determination he had come, they renewed their complaints; they repeated that the army was exhausted, that there was no more blood left to spill, so much had been already shed. The marshals were so eager to obtain a sanction to their offering their services to the new government, that, had they met opposition, they might in the end have forgotten for the first time the respect due to Napoleon. But after having, through a kind of mischievous enjoyment, left them some moments in doubt, Napoleon said to them—"Gentlemen, make your mind easy, neither you nor the army will be called on to shed more blood; I consent to abdicate unconditionally. I would have wished, for your sakes as well as for the sake of my family, to secure the succession of the throne for my son. I believe such an event would have been still more profitable to you than to me, for you would have lived under a government consonant to your origin, to your opinions, and to your interests. This was possible, but a disgraceful desertion has deprived you of a position that I hoped to secure you; but for the defection of the 6th corps, we might have done that, and more, we might have restored the fortunes of France. The event has been otherwise. I submit to my fate, do you submit to yours; resign yourselves to live under the Bourbons, and serve them faithfully. You have wished for repose, you shall have it; but, alas!—God grant that my presentiments deceive me—we are not a generation made for repose; the peace that you so much desire will cut down more of you on your beds of down than war would have done in our bivouacs." After pronouncing these words, in a sad and impressive manner, Napoleon read the act of his abdication, couched in these terms:—

"The allied powers, having proclaimed that the Emperor Napoleon was the only obstacle to the re-establishment of peace in Europe, the Emperor Napoleon, faithful to his oath, declares that he renounces, for himself and his heirs, the thrones of France and Italy, because there is no sacrifice, even that of life, which he is not ready to make for the interests of France."

After hearing this document read, Napoleon's lieutenants rushed forward, seized his hands, and thanked him for the sacrifice he had made, and repeated what they had already said touching his conditional abdication, that in descending after such a fashion from the throne, he showed himself greater than ever. He allowed their secret joy to find vent in these last flatteries, and permitted them to speak on, for he did not wish to demean either them or himself by contemptible recriminations. Besides, who had made them what they were? He alone, by the despotism that had destroyed their individuality,

by the interminable wars that had exhausted their strength; he had therefore no right to complain, and he acted nobly in recognising the inevitable consequences of his errors, and submitting without an outburst of feeling alike disagreeable to all parties.

It was then agreed that M. de Caulaincourt, accompanied, as before, by the Marshals Macdonald and Ney, should go to Paris, and lay before Alexander the definite act of abdication, an act of which he was to be the sole depository, and which he was to exchange for the treaty that was to secure the imperial family a suitable provision. Napoleon insisted once more that no efforts should be made, if such were needed, to ensure success, excepting for what concerned his son and his relatives. He dismissed the marshals, and affectionately pressed the hand of M. de Caulaincourt, who enjoyed the largest share of his confidence.

No sooner was this intelligence circulated at Fontainebleau than a deep sadness was visible on the faces of the old soldiers. Amongst the officers of high rank, on the contrary, a feeling of immense relief was the prevailing sentiment. They could now, without qualms of conscience, quit the old master for the new. The greater number of the marshals were already considering the best mode of sending in their adhesion to the provisional government. They would willingly have confided the task to M. de Caulaincourt, if his immeasurable superiority had not prohibited the idea of his accepting such a confidence. But their anxiety had nearly reached its term, and within twenty-four hours acts of adhesion were to be seen in abundance, with signatures capable of putting the most scrupulous at their ease.

M. de Caulaincourt and the two marshals set out immediately for Paris, where they arrived at a late hour on the 6th. At midnight they were admitted to the Emperor of Russia, who awaited their coming with extreme impatience, an impatience shared by the provisional government and its numerous adherents. Though the defection of the 6th corps had greatly diminished the fears that Napoleon still inspired, and though the assurances given by Marshal Ney and the greater number of the military personages with whom the royalists were in correspondence left little doubt as to the speedy adhesion of the army, they were still terrified in thinking of what might be attempted by the infernal spirit, as they called him, that had retired to Fontainebleau, and whom they honoured by the fear they felt, even whilst seeking to dishonour him by an accumulation of unheard-of insults. There was a kind of general joy when Marshal Ney said to the most eager among the frequenters of the Hôtel St. Florentin, that they might

make their minds easy, for the act of unconditional abdication had arrived. When Napoleon's envoys appeared before the Emperor Alexander, this prince, who on former occasions always shook hands with M. de Caulaincourt first, now ran to Marshal Ney, to thank him for what he had done, and tell him that of all the services he had rendered to his country, the last would not be esteemed the least valuable. The Russian monarch alluded to the letter of the previous evening, in which Marshal Ney boasted of having forced Napoleon to abdicate, and promised to be the bearer of the formal act. M. de Caulaincourt and Marshal Macdonald, ignorant of the existence of this letter, and not having seen anything that could induce them to consider Marshal Ney as the author of Napoleon's last resolves, were very much surprised, and testified their astonishment to Marshal Ney, who became embarrassed. Alexander did not delay to express to the two other negotiators the thanks he had at first exclusively addressed to Marshal Ney, and having learned on what conditions they would deliver the important document of which they were the depositories, he made no objection. As to the isle of Elba, however, he declared he would keep his word, because he considered himself pledged by what he had said to M. de Caulaincourt; but his allies considered the concession imprudent, and blamed it openly; but he was determined it should be so, as he had promised—that touching the King of Rome and Marie Louise, a principality in Italy was the least they could get, and the Emperor of Austria was about to recover so much territory in that country that he certainly would not higgle with his own daughter; that as to Napoleon's brothers, his first wife, and his adopted children, Prince Eugène and Queen Hortense, they should obtain a suitable provision, for which he would become personally responsible; that his minister, M. de Nesselrode, would, if necessary, advocate the interests of the Bonaparte family; that they could refer to this minister for the details, but might, in case of any difficulty arising, apply to himself (Alexander). In dismissing the negotiators, the Emperor of Russia detained M. de Caulaincourt, and explained himself more frankly with this noble-minded man, whom he always treated as a friend, and acknowledged to him that the intelligence he had just received of the insurrection of the French peasants, without alarming, disturbed him, for these peasants had massacred a numerous Russian detachment in the Vosges. He afterwards dwelt, with deep commiseration, on the desertions that were so numerous amongst Napoleon's followers, and recommended that no time should be lost in arranging his personal concerns, for two feelings, he said, were at that time being rapidly developed—the baseness of those who had served under the empire, and the

extravagant exultation of the royalist party. He spoke of the Bourbons and their friends with extraordinary frankness, exhibiting, at the same time, surprise, disgust, and ill-humour at what he witnessed on every side, and said, that after having had so much trouble in escaping from the warlike follies of Napoleon, the allies would have considerable difficulty in protecting themselves from the reactionary follies of the royalists. Alexander dismissed M. de Caulaincourt, promising his friendship for himself and his support in aiding Napoleon.

Even after the deposition was pronounced by the Senate, Napoleon at Fontainebleau still inspired a degree of fear that held the royalists in check, and prevented them giving full vent to their feelings. The defection of the 6th corps, which rendered Napoleon completely powerless, had considerably tranquillised them; but on learning his unconditional abdication, that is to say, the sheathing, by his own act, of his terrible sword, they no longer felt any measure in the expression of their sentiments. That they should be, after so many sufferings, so much bloodshed, and so many disasters, public and private, delighted to see again the princes under whom they had been young, rich, powerful, and happy, was quite natural and legitimate. That to their joy they should add all the fury of triumphant hate, was, alas! perfectly natural, though sadly derogatory to the dignity of France. Never was there witnessed in any country a greater outburst of long-restrained rage than was now displayed, and it must be confessed that the partisans of the ancient dynasty, especially known as royalists, were not the sole execrators of the deposed emperor. Fathers and mothers of families who had hitherto cursed in secret a war that devoured their children, now feeling themselves free to give vent to their sentiments, called Napoleon the most atrocious names. Nero had not been more execrated in ancient nor Robespierre in modern times. He was now generally called "The Corsican Ogre." He was represented as a monster occupied in destroying whole generations, to glut a devouring passion for war. A document secretly prepared by M. de Chateaubriand during the last hours of the empire, and published under the protection of foreign bayonets, was the correct expression of this overflow of unparalleled hate. In this production it would seem that passion had stirred up the dregs of the bad taste too frequently discernible in the writer's style; M. de Chateaubriand attributed to Napoleon every vice, every meanness, every crime. The production was read with incredible avidity at Paris, and from Paris it passed into the provinces, always excepting those into which the enemy had penetrated. Strange contrast! the provinces that had suffered most from Napoleon's errors were less adverse to him than the others, for

the former pertinaciously regarded him as the defender of their native land. Everywhere else the public anger went on increasing, like an angry man who becomes still more angry as he continues to scold, so the public mind appeared to become intoxicated by its own fury. The murder of the Duke of Enghien, that had been so long consigned to silence, the perfidious meeting at Bayonne, where the Spanish princes had been deceived, were made subject-matter of the darkest narratives, as if the truth, which was bad enough, needed the heightening of calumny. The return from Egypt, the retreat from Russia, were talked of as cowardly desertions of the betrayed French army. Napoleon, it was said, had only made one campaign that was really brilliant. There were, in his long military career, only a few successful events, obtained by force of arms. The art of war, degraded in his hands, had become a mere butchery. His government, hitherto so admired, was now talked of as a horrible fiscal system, designed to extract the last crown from the pocket of his last subject. The immortal campaign of 1814 was only a succession of desperate acts inspired by despair. An order given by the artillery, in the battle of 30th March, without Napoleon's sanction, who was then 80 leagues from Paris, ordering the destruction of the munitions at Grenelle, that they might not fall into the enemy's hands, was regarded as a design to blow up the capital. An officer, willing to flatter the dominant passions of the day, declared that he had refused to execute this fearful order. The monster, it was said, had wished to destroy Paris, like a corsair who wishes to blow up his vessel, only with this difference, that he was not on board. As to the rest, it was added that he was not a Frenchman, which ought to be a matter of congratulation for the honour of France. He had changed his name from *Buonaparte* to *Bonaparte*, but he ought to be called Buonaparte. Even the name Napoleon did not belong to him. Napoleon was an imaginary saint: it was *Nicholas* that ought to be joined to his family name. This monster, it was said, this enemy of mankind, was an infidel. Whilst that at his chapel or Nôtre Dame he attended mass, in private with Monge, Volney, and others, he professed atheism. He was hard-hearted, coarse, beat his generals, insulted women, and in his military capacity no better than a coward. "And France," his enemies exclaimed, "France had submitted to this man." Such an aberration of intellect could only be explained by the political blindness that succeeds revolutions! This outpouring of words was accompanied by acts of the same character. Napoleon's statue, to which a rope had been uselessly fastened for the purpose of pulling it down the day the allies entered Paris, was assailed some days after with the aid of machinery, and taken down from the Austerlitz column and placed in a govern-

ment store, and public hate, gazing on the monument, had the satisfaction of seeing the summit bare.

Such was the fierce explosion of anger to which, by a terrible reaction in sublunary things, Napoleon was exposed—he who during twenty years had been so servilely flattered, he whose deeds had excited the admiration of the astonished world. But he was too great not to remain unmoved by such indignities, whilst he was at the same time conscious that his own acts had produced this revulsion of public feeling. And the flatteries lavished at the same time on the allied sovereigns made the picture of humanity still more pitiable. Alexander, undoubtedly, by his own conduct and the example he gave his allies, deserved the thanks of the French people. But if ingratitude cannot be sanctioned under any circumstances, gratitude ought to be measured in expression when addressed to the conquerors of our native land. Yet it was not so, and the royalists went so far as to say that the allied sovereigns, who had suffered so much from the French, displayed great magnanimity in taking so gentle a vengeance. The flames of Moscow were every day recalled, not by Russian, but by French writers. They were not content with praising Marshal Blucher and General Sacken, brave men, whose praise was natural and well-deserved from Prussian and Russian lips; but these writers sought out a French emigrant, General Langeron, who served in the army of the czar, and related with complacency how he had distinguished himself in the attack on Montmartre, and with what well-merited rewards he had been loaded by the Russian monarch. Thus, amongst the many changes of our great and terrible revolution, patriotism, like liberty, was doomed to reverses; and just as liberty, the idol of every heart in 1789, became in 1793 the object of universal execration, in like manner patriotism had now fallen into such disrepute that the act of bearing arms against the natal soil, an act condemned in every age, now met laudation. Weary days of reaction, when the public mind, losing its primary notions of right and wrong, rejects what it had adored, and adores what it had rejected, and esteems the most shameful contradiction a happy reconversion to truth.

It naturally followed that if Napoleon were a monster from whose grasp France ought to be torn, the Bourbons were accomplished princes, to whom it ought to be restored as soon as possible as their legitimate property. France had not quite forgotten them; for twenty years were not sufficient to consign to oblivion an illustrious family that had reigned with glory during centuries; but the present generation was entirely ignorant how and in what degree they were related to the unfortunate king who died on the scaffold, and the not less unfortunate

child that died in custody of a cobbler. The populace asked each other if these were the sons, brothers, or cousins of those unfortunate princes, for with the exception of a few aged persons, the populace knew nothing of the matter. Flattery, quick to turn from him who was now called the deposed tyrant to those who were designated saving angels, attributed to the latter every virtue, and they certainly possessed some that deserved to be extolled in language more refined and classical than that in which their praises were sung. It was told that Louis XVI. had left a brother, Louis Stanislaus Xavier, now destined to succeed him under the name of Louis XVIII.; that he was a savant, a literary man, and a philosopher; that he had left another brother, the Count d'Artois, a model of French goodness and elegance; and nephews, the Dukes of Angoulême and Berry, types of ancient chivalrous honour. Under these princes, gentle and just, having preserved the virtues that a fearful revolution had almost driven from earth, France, beloved and respected by Europe, would find repose, and bequeath it to the world. She would find peace, which she had never met amid the orgies of demagogy, and which would be now presented to her by princes formed during twenty years in the English school. There was incontestably some truth in this flattery, and all might have turned to an enduring good, had not party spirit perverted these many promising elements of prosperity and peace.

Be this as it may, independent of their merit, the Bourbons had in their favour the law of necessity. In fact, the Republic, still all stained with the blood shed in 1793, not being presentable to terrified France, royalty alone was mentionable; and of the two forms then existing, that of genius and that of tradition, the former was rendered unacceptable by its own wild extravagances, and what remained but the latter, with memories hallowed by time and renovated by misfortune? It was therefore very natural that, some days having been employed in recalling the Bourbons to the public mind, the people rallied round them with an hourly increasing enthusiasm.

Two things were needed to be done expeditiously—to draw up a constitution that would impose conditions on the Bourbons in recalling them, and meanwhile receive the Count d'Artois at Paris. The Count d'Artois had remained concealed at Nancy, as we have seen, awaiting the return of M. de Vitrolles, who had come to make arrangements with the provisional government, and who did not wish to return to the prince until the question of Marie Louise's regency was settled. This regency having been irrevocably rejected, and the recall of the Bourbons being the only imaginable solution of the political difficulty, it became necessary to send M. de Vitrolles to Nancy to see the prince. M. de Talleyrand and the members of the provisional

government, spite of M. de Vitrolles' importunities, instructed him to tell the Count d'Artois that he would be received at the gates of Paris with all the honours due to his rank; that he would be conducted to Nôtre Dame to hear a *Te Deum* chanted, and from Nôtre Dame to the Tuileries; that he should enter the city dressed in the uniform of the national guards; that it was even desirable that he should wear the tricolor cockade, for this would be a sure means of gaining the affections of the army; that such was the opinion of those enlightened men whose concurrence was indispensably necessary for carrying out his views; that the power attributed to him would be that of the representative of Louis XVIII., of whose letters patent he was the bearer; that these letters would be submitted to the Senate, who, basing their conduct on them, would bestow on the prince the title of Lieutenant-General of the Kingdom, implying, of course, an adhesion to the conditions of the new constitution.

M. de Vitrolles, under the inspiration of the sentiments that animated the old royalist party, exclaimed loudly against the tricolor cockade, white being in his opinion the colour of the ancient dynasty and the emblem of the Bourbons' inalienable right; he was also indignant at the pretension of the Senate to invest the Count d'Artois with royal power; and above all, at the idea of imposing a constitution on the legitimate sovereign. M. de Talleyrand, not wishing to enter into a discussion, and trusting that time would settle all things, said rather carelessly to M. de Vitrolles that it was better to set off without delay, and find the prince; that at the moment of his entrance the difficulty of the cockade could be settled; that touching the constitution, it was indispensable that one should be framed, but it would be rendered as little irksome as possible, and the framers would especially endeavour to avoid the appearance of imposing a law. M. de Talleyrand repeated to M. de Vitrolles, in a word, that it was better to set off, and not impede, by puerile objections, the progress of events. He commissioned him at the same time to carry to the prince the assurance of his absolute personal devotedness.

In order to convince M. de Vitrolles that he could not do better than depart with these conditions, an audience with the Emperor Alexander was procured him. During this audience, M. de Vitrolles having attempted with the arrogance of the victorious party to plead for the ancient colours and unconditional liberty for the King of France, the Emperor Alexander, laying aside his habitual gentleness, told him the allied sovereigns had not crossed the Rhine with four hundred thousand men to make France the slave of emigration; that without pretending to impose a government on France, they would be

guided by the opinion of the actual and sole acknowledged and admissible authority, the Senate; that having used this body to dethrone Napoleon, they would not repay the service with ingratitude, by dethroning the Senate; that, moreover, the authority of the Senate was in their eyes the only safe, the only enlightened authority existing in France, and that it was this body alone that could imprint on any public act a character at once legal and national; that besides, the power that had burst open the gates of Paris was still within its walls, that this power represented all Europe, so it was better to submit, and not force the allies to regret that they had pledged themselves so deeply in favour of the Bourbons.

M. de Vitrolles would have been tempted to contradict, for he now regarded as detestable the foreign influence that he had himself gone to Troyes to solicit, but which he found intolerable when made the vehicle of good advice. However, there was no reply to be made, and M. de Vitrolles set out, the bearer of conditions imposed by the provisional government, resolving with his friends to curtail them as much as possible in the execution.

The most urgent business was to draw up the constitution. It was necessary to use despatch, in the first place, to render Napoleon's deposition definite, by appointing the Bourbons his successors; secondly, to bind the Bourbons themselves in their recall, by imposing on them the principles of 1789. This two-fold idea, of recalling the Bourbons and restricting them by wise laws, had been propagated by M. de Talleyrand, and had gradually taken possession of the public mind. According to the original project, it was the provisional government that was to draw up the plan of a constitution. To accomplish the task, M. de Talleyrand had wished to obtain the assistance of the most enlightened and influential members of the Senate, and for that purpose had assembled them at his house. At the very first words uttered on this important subject the most contradictory ideas were enunciated, those ideas that were dominant in 1791, and entailed so much public confusion. In fact, the political education of France, successively interrupted by the reign of terror and the empire, had been, so to speak, suspended, and the prevailing ideas now were those of the *Assemblée Constituante*, moderated certainly by existing circumstances. M. de Talleyrand, who hated disputation, resolved to let the senators do as they pleased, recommending them three things—to be expeditious, to restrict the Bourbons in recalling them, and to make the restriction efficacious, he advised that the Senate should be interwoven in the new constitution under the title of "Upper Chamber of the Restored Monarchy." He thus sought to please the Senate, of which he had need, and render that

body an obstacle to emigration. After giving this advice, M. de Talleyrand abandoned the work, and there only remained of the members of the provisional government the Abbé Montesquiou, a haughty and persevering debater, constantly demanding what conditions were to be imposed on the Bourbons, of whom he was the secret and devoted agent.

The discussions between the Abbé Montesquiou and the senators commissioned to draw up the constitution were very animated. The points of dispute were the following. The Senate wished, in the first place, that Louis XVIII., the brother of the unfortunate Louis XVI., and his heir, since the death of the august orphan, who was imprisoned in the temple, should be recalled by the *freewill of the people*, and invested with the insignia of royalty, after having sworn to observe the new constitution. The nation applied to this prince, unquestionably because of his royal origin, whose hereditary value they recognised, but the people sought him *freely*, and accepted him *on condition*, and in virtue of the right the nation had to choose a ruler. The Senate wished to conciliate both claims, that of the ancient royalty and that of the nation, by acknowledging both claims, and binding them by a reciprocal contract. This point, after a warm discussion, being decided, next came the question of the form of government, upon which happily there was no dispute, even amongst those the most opposed upon other matters. Thus an inviolable king was immediately admitted, who was to be the sole depository of the executive power, exercising it through responsible ministers, sharing the legislative power with two chambers, the one aristocratic, the other democratic. There were some differences of opinion as to the details of carrying out this system. Those persons who were deeply imbued with the prejudices of the *Constituante* wished that the two chambers should enjoy the privilege of taking the initiative in framing the laws, the right being secured to the king of affixing his sanction, a right which no person thought of contesting. The French had not at that epoch learned by experience that under this form of government the most important point for the chambers is to obtain, by constitutional means, ministers of their own choice. These ministers, once appointed, pass laws the most agreeable to the majority, for otherwise, ministers constrained to pass and execute laws that do not emanate from themselves would be either the most awkward or the most insincere of legislative administrators. For want of experience, or, to speak more correctly, under the influence of a too recent and sad experience, these debates spoke of depriving the king of the prerogative of making peace and war, forgetting that all these prerogatives which they claimed for the chambers are more properly combined into one, that of deposing or appoint-

ing ministers who, being elected by the majority, would make, as the majority pleased, either peace or war. Another subject that excited lengthened discussions was the formation of the two chambers. The second, called the "Lower House" by the English, who are too proud not to attach importance to things, not to words, provoked no discussion. Instead of having the members appointed by the Senate from the candidates presented by the electoral bodies, as was done under the empire, it was agreed that the Second Chamber should be directly chosen by the electoral colleges, investing the actual administration with the duty of organising these colleges. The most serious debate arose on the subject of the Upper Chamber. M. de Talleyrand and his *collaborateurs* were desirous that, under the restored monarchy of the Bourbons, the chief power should be invested in the Senate, which was composed of the most illustrious men of the Revolution and the empire. It would certainly have been a most desirable measure, for the members of the Senate were so long accustomed to submit, that they would not have been importunate to royalty, and at the same time too deeply imbued with the sentiments of the French Revolution, not to oppose an invincible obstacle to emigration. In this manner M. de Talleyrand encouraged the senators to fix themselves solidly in the new constitution by declaring themselves hereditary peers. In this the Emperor Alexander fully agreed with him, for this generous-minded and enthusiastic prince, being accompanied by his former tutor, M. de Laharpe, and brought by him into contact with the most liberal of the senators, entered fully into their ideas, and shrank from placing France under the yoke of emigration, after having freed her from the yoke of the empire; he wished to make use of the Senate alone, either in dethroning Napoleon, or binding the Bourbons by constitutional laws in recalling them.

Encouraged in these tendencies by sincere conviction, by their own interests, and by the approval of high personages, the senators were determined not to stop at half measures. They wished that the entire Senate should constitute the Upper Chamber under the Bourbons, and in order that this chamber should not be inundated by numerous promotions of emigrant peers, they wished to limit the members of the chamber to the actual number of the senators, and only grant the king the prerogative of filling up the vacancies, a very limited prerogative where the principle of a hereditary peerage was admitted. To these political advantages the senators intended to add some of a pecuniary nature, by converting into real property the funds out of which their salaries were paid, the entire to be equally divided between the actual senators. As to the rest, not wishing to seem exclusively occupied with themselves, the

senators wished the existing legislative corps should compose the Lower Chamber under the monarchy, until a new election should take place.

There were many points on which not one dissentient voice was heard: the vote for supplies and taxation by the chambers, equality of justice for all ranks, permanency of the magisterial office, individual liberty, religious liberty, liberty of the press under a certain limited censorship, eligibility of all Frenchmen to public employments, the continuance of ranks and pensions in the army, the conservation of the Legion of Honour, a recognition of the new nobility and re-establishment of the old, an inviolable respect for the public debt, an irrevocable sanction of sales of what was called "national property," and lastly, an act of oblivion, including all persons who by word or deed had taken a part in public affairs since 1789. From this moment, all parties were agreed, with the exception of some slight details as to the form of the monarchy designated as *constitutional*, and which consisted of an inviolable hereditary king represented by responsible ministers, with two chambers representing different social classes, and furnished with means of bending the ministers to their will; a monarchy which is neither English nor French nor German, but of all times and countries, for it is the only possible monarchical form that remains after an absolute monarchy is rejected.

Generally speaking, the mass of the royalists, intoxicated with joy at the idea of again beholding the Bourbons, thought little of constitutional questions. Provided they could obtain a king such as they knew in former times, they were satisfied. In fact, they would have preferred to see the king absolute as in former times, than surrounded by revolutionary trammels; but they were satisfied to have their king on any terms, as with him they felt confident of recovering the happiness they enjoyed in olden times. However, some persons, either more thoughtful or more subtle, having systematised their prejudices, wished that the king should return *free*, and declared they would not receive him if he were shackled by conditions. Of the latter, the Abbé Montesquiou was one of the most zealous. In his opinion, and the opinion of the rest of his party, the king was sole sovereign, and the pretended sovereignty of the people was only a revolutionary impertinence. Undoubtedly the king, whose eyes were not closed against the light, might from time to time, say every century or half century, perceive that abuses existed, and reform them, but of his own free authority, by granting reformatory measures, which might even go so far as to modify the forms of government, but never abrogate the principle of an absolute royal authority. Such were the only concessions that these high-class royalists would

make; but to impose conditions on the royal authority, an authority of divine origin, emanating from God, not from men, binding the king by an oath, and only restoring the crown on such conditions to its legitimate possessor, would be in their opinion so many acts of rebellion and insurrection.

M. de Talleyrand, having little time and less inclination to occupy himself with questions of this kind, besides confiding to the Senate the care of restraining the Bourbons, he left M. de Montesquiou to dispute with the senators commissioned to draw up the new constitution. This abbé, though a philosopher and a politician, could not restrain his anger when the principle of national sovereignty was enunciated in his presence. However, he was not so besotted as to advocate openly the opposite principle, or suppose it would ever obtain the ascendant, for it would be easier to turn back our planet in its orbit than induce old revolutionists to recognise the king as sole sovereign and the nation as subject, with no other right than that of being well treated by him, in the same way as the lower animals have a right not to be overworked by man. But whilst getting angry, and exclaiming against this and against that, M. de Montesquiou dared not attack the main difficulty, and contest the principle of a contract existing between the monarch and the people. But he took advantage of the opportunity afforded by the Senate, who had given themselves so conspicuous a place in the future constitution; on this subject he was violent, and almost insulting. "And what are you," he said to the senators, "to assume such authority, both with regard to the nation and the king? And first, with regard to the nation, what title have you but what is derived from a constitution that you have just overturned, or a confidence of which the nation has as yet given no evidence, and which possibly it does not feel in you? As to the king, he does not know you; he is my sovereign and yours; he returns by the instrumentality of providential decrees, of which neither you nor I am the author, and will not submit to any condition imposed by you. To limit the number of peers! To give the king only the prerogative of filling the vacancies! But this is violating the principles of constitutional monarchy, such as they are understood in England, the country where they are best known; it would be making the peerage an omnipotent oligarchy, against which the king would be powerless for two reasons—because he could not dissolve the Upper as he could the Lower Chamber; nor could he create peers, the number being already limited. The peerage will be, in fact, an absolute monarch, and you would yourselves constitute this peerage. You would recall the king only to make him serve as a veil to your own power."

It must be acknowledged that on this last point the Abbé

Montesquiou was right, because limiting the number of peers was, in fact, to render the peerage absolute. But he was offensive, even impertinent, and seemed to tell the senators that they might retain their pensions and some of them their seats, but that was all that could be done for a body of revolutionists who no longer possessed the popular favour, who would never obtain the royal confidence, and who had thrown away their sole support in breaking Napoleon's power.

The senators might have replied that they represented neither the king nor the nation, who at the actual time had no representatives, but that, with all their faults and weaknesses, they represented something very important—the French Revolution; that they were the faithful depositories of its principles; that this constituted an immense moral force, to which they united an actual force equally incontestable—that of being the only authority recognised, especially by the all-powerful foreigners then at Paris; that they held the crown in their hands, and would bestow it *conditionally;* but those who pretended to the crown were expected to refuse it if the conditions did not suit them.

Unfortunately amongst the senators, who were so tenacious of their opinions, though the energy of their character was broken down, there was not one capable of speaking energetically. Instead of replying, they contented themselves with acting. Looking on M. de Montesquiou as an insolent spirit, the precursor of others still worse, they lost no time drawing up in writing the plan of the constitution as they had conceived it; in this they were encouraged by the secret approbation of M. de Talleyrand and the undisguised approval of the Emperor Alexander. We may as well add that these altercations reached their highest point on the 5th April, the very day that the marshals were pleading at Paris for the regency of Marie Louise, and the representatives of royalty were in the greatest alarm. It would be evidently an incalculable advantage to obtain at such a moment a proclamation of the Bourbons by the Senate, no matter on what conditions. "Let us put an end to it," said M. de Talleyrand to M. de Montesquiou; "let us obtain from the only recognised authority the exclusion of the Bonapartes, and the recall of the Bourbons, and we shall afterwards endeavour either to throw off what is disagreeable, or submit to it." "Put an end to it," he said also to the senators; "proclaim the Bourbons, for Bonaparte will make you pay dearly for your acts of the 1st and 2nd of April. Proclaim the Bourbons, and impose on them what conditions you please. If these conditions do not suit them, they will refuse the crown, but you need not fear that. They will accept the crown on any conditions, and we shall be delivered from the power of

the madman at Fontainebleau." These counsels, which rather palliated than removed the difficulty, pointed out, however, a means of extrication from the existing embarrassment. The Senate followed M. de Talleyrand's advice, and the next day—the 6th—whilst the marshals were returning to Fontainebleau to demand the emperor's unconditional abdication, the Senate voted the acceptance of the constitution, based on the conditions we have quoted.

The Senate declared in the act of constitution that they *recalled to the throne of their own freewill*, under the title of KING OF THE FRENCH, Louis Stanislaus Xavier, brother of Louis XVI., and conferred upon him the hereditary royalty, with which the prince was not to be invested until he should have sworn to observe faithfully the new constitution. There were now established an inviolable king, responsible ministers, two chambers, one hereditary, the other elective; the hereditary chamber was composed of the Senate, whose number was limited to two hundred members, this left the king fifty nominations; the existing legislative corps composed the elective chamber until new elections; their dotations were secured to the members of the Senate, and their salaries to those of the legislative corps; the executive power was invested exclusively in the king, including the prerogative of making peace and war; the legislative power was to be exercised conjointly by the king and the two chambers; there was to be a permanent magistracy; religious liberty, individual liberty, and the liberty of the press were to be recognised principles; the Legion of Honour was to be maintained, the two noblesse, the privileges enjoyed by the army, the public debt was to be respected, and what was called national sales, and lastly, an act of oblivion for all acts and votes prior to, &c., &c.

These conditions, drawn up in terms simple, clear, and sufficiently general to allow many after alterations, were voted on the evening of the 6th. On the 7th the constitution was printed, and on the 8th published in the different quarters of the capital. It must be acknowledged that it did not produce a favourable impression. The Senate ought to have been strongly supported in the present instance, for it was that body alone who could transfer the crown from Napoleon to the Bourbons, that body only who in the transfer had any title to represent the nation, and obtain favourable conditions for her; but the Senate, that for so many reasons ought to have been supported, was neither esteemed nor loved by anybody. The Bonapartists reproached the Senate with having lifted a parricidal hand against their founder; the friends of liberty, scarcely awakened from a long sleep, saw in the Senate only the servile instrument of an insupportable despotism; lastly, the syste-

matic royalists, considering that body as the representative of the Revolution and the empire, were indignant that the senators, degraded as they were, should dare to dictate conditions to the legitimate king; and such conditions! conditions borrowed from a detested revolution. This was in the eyes of the royalists an act of rebellion, of impudence, and unheard-of effrontery. To oppose the Senate, they had recourse to the simplest means—those adopted by M. de Montesquiou; they attacked the Senate in its weak point, and exclaimed, as did the entire public, against the solicitude displayed by the Senate in guarding their own interests by securing the perpetuity of their own incomes. The press took up the cry, not in the form of newspapers, but of pamphlets, which were the fashion of the day, and endless reprobation and bitter pleasantries were poured out against the *conservative* senators who, of all they had undertaken to conserve, had only succeeded in taking care of their own incomes. Convicted avarice is one of those vices against which it is most easy to excite public laughter, for men generally condemn most loudly in others the failings to which they are most subject themselves. Consequently, a universal and contemptuous laugh was raised against the Senate. The public fell into the snare, and did not perceive that in mocking the Senate they became themselves the partisans of emigration, whose evil consequences were at this time much more to be feared than the acts of the Senate. This was a misfortune which temperate and enlightened men—always so rare in times of revolution—could alone appreciate. But the mass of the public, joining their voice to that of the royalists, seemed to say to the senators—"Begone with the master that you knew neither how to restrain nor defend!"

The royalists, who were not very expert in the trade of politics, for they had been long out of practice, endeavoured to play off the legislative corps against the Senate, but without much success. The legislative corps, prorogued by Napoleon, on account of its recent manifestation, had not been legally convoked. But the question of legality presents little difficulty at a time when sovereigns are being dethroned, and the members of the legislative council assembled in full force to play their part in the new revolution. Finding the first place already taken by the Senate who of their own authority had pronounced the deposition of Napoleon and the recall of the Bourbons, and whom the foreign sovereigns recognised as the sole existing authority, the members of the legislative corps were obliged to play a secondary part, and follow the others; they were evidently jealous. Though they had not formerly shown more firmness than the Senate, and possessed still less intelligence, they enjoyed a certain amount of popularity in consideration of their

mode of acting in the previous December, and the royalists, divining their jealousy, began to flatter for the purpose of making use of them. However, these intrigues could be of very little consequence. The legislative corps, obliged to utter a few words of assent to the important resolutions that had just been adopted, might indeed hold a language somewhat different to that of the Senate, but was incapable of putting forth antagonistic resolutions, and the Bourbons were consequently to return, bound by the constitution of the 6th of April, or by one nearly similar; this was the important point.

M. de Caulaincourt, who had been especially charged to advocate the interests of Napoleon and his family, saw with grief the influx of adhesions that poured into Paris since the fact of the unconditional abdication had become known. Marshals Victor, Oudinot, Lefebvre, and a crowd of generals had hastened to send in their allegiance to the provisional government. The ministers of the empire assembled round Marie Louise at Blois, had, for the most part, done the same, and at their head was Prince High Chancellor Cambacérès. It was only the field-officers who were at a distance—Marshals Soult, Suchet, Augereau, Davout, and General Maison, commanding respectively the armies of Spain, Catalonia, Lyon, Westphalia, and Flanders—who did not speak out, for they had not had time. But the provisional government had despatched emissaries to summon them officially, and beg them earnestly to support the new order of things, pointing out at the same time the uselessness and danger of resistance; and with the exception of Marshal Davout, the obstinacy of whose temper was well known, favourable replies were expressed from all of these, and it must be said that such expectations were well grounded, for Napoleon having once abdicated, what interest, public or private, could be alleged in favour of a prolonged resistance.

Each passing day, in giving fresh strength to the new government, rendered Napoleon weaker, and his representatives more dependent on the negotiators with whom they had to treat. Alexander had, with a high sense of honour, warned M. de Caulaincourt of this, and advised him to hasten; "For," he said, "the most I shall be able to do, in exerting all my authority, will be to secure the fulfilment of what I have promised." In fact, Alexander's weakness in placing Napoleon so near the European continent, by granting him the island of Elba, was loudly condemned in the allied camp and in the salons of the provisional government. There was one person in particular, the Duke d'Otranto, who, having had a mission to Murat during the last campaign, was in despair at being absent from Paris whilst a revolution was being effected, and thus allowing M. de

Talleyrand to play the most conspicuous part. Less suited than the latter to negotiate with the European cabinets, he was much fitter to conduct intrigues with the different bodies of the State; and had he been at Paris, he would have acquired an influence almost equal to that of M. de Talleyrand. But, fated to play only the second part, he went, came, blamed, approved, advised, and exclaimed against the idea of according the isle of Elba to Napoleon, for whom he entertained as much hatred as fear. He called Alexander's generous imprudence folly, and by dint of talking he had excited a strong opposition against the conditions promised to the deposed emperor. On the other hand, Austria was unwilling to grant a principality in Italy to Marie Louise; it was even doubtful whether she would consent to accord Parma and Plaisance, but she absolutely refused Tuscany. In fact, even the provisional government entertained objections. This government did not wish to concede to Napoleon the honour of stipulating certain advantages for the army, such as the conservation of the tricolor cockade and the Legion of Honour, asserting that he had no longer any interest in such things; the provisional government also contested the pecuniary conditions, less on account of the expense to the treasury than because these concessions implied a recognition of the imperial reign. But Alexander had declared his opinion decidedly, and even with a kind of anger, and gave his allies to understand that they were under sufficient obligations to him not to force him to break his word. He therefore wished for an immediate decision. But M. de Metternich had remained at Dijon with the Emperor of Austria, not caring to appear at Paris whilst Marie Louise was being dethroned; and Lord Castlereagh, not wishing to become responsible to the two English Houses for the recall of the Bourbons, which, however, he ardently desired, had delayed coming to Paris. The arrival of these two ministers was announced for the 10th, and it was impossible to conclude without them.

A slight incident was very near interrupting the negotiations, and giving events an entirely new course. If some of Napoleon's adherents exhibited hourly evidences of moral fear, the greater number became more warm at sight of the general weakness. The latter forgot that a few days before they too had participated in the general feeling of weariness, and had cursed a hundred times the exorbitant ambition which had caused their blood to flow so often on the battlefield; they were now entirely impressed by the sight of the great man deserted and left almost alone at Fontainebleau. Some certainly thought bitterly of their career suddenly broken off, but all were heartily disgusted at Marmont's defection, and the ingratitude that stained his conduct; they cried out against treason,

and were ready to fall upon their chiefs, whom they accused of being the cause of the emperor's forced abdication. In fact, a report was circulated that the marshals had used violence to oblige Napoleon to renounce the throne. To a suppositious fact were added false details, and many hot-headed partisans were not far from proceeding to actual violence, in retaliation for imaginary wrongs, which they took pleasure in recounting. When Napoleon appeared in the court of the Fontainebleau palace, many officers brandished their swords, and offered to sacrifice their lives for him. Deeply touched by such demonstrations, and calculating the forces that still remained to his lieutenants, Soult, Suchet, Augereau, Eugène, Maison, and Davout, he could not repress some feelings of regret, nor prevent their manifestation. Sympathising with this sentiment, young, generous, but thoughtless men, who experienced for him an increased enthusiasm, had, on the nights of the 7th and 8th, exhibited more than usual emotion. The old chasseurs and grenadiers of the guard, who had remained at Fontainebleau, distinguished themselves especially on this occasion; they traversed the streets of the little town, crying out—"Long live the emperor! down with the traitors!" They threatened to massacre those whom they qualified as traitors, and wildly demanded to be led on to Paris. However, after yielding a moment, Napoleon seeing in his cooler reason that no great advantage could be drawn from such a movement, sent his most faithful servants to calm a fruitless ebullition of feeling. This burst of emotion was the last effort of a flame that was about to expire.

One of the officers who did not take part in these imprudent regrets, and feared the consequences, had had the cowardice to inform the allies, adding the falsehood that Napoleon had escaped from Fontainebleau, intending to put himself at the head of the armies of Italy, Catalonia, and Spain.* When this intelligence reached the headquarters of the sovereigns, great alarm was excited. After the desertion of the sixth corps, which was involuntary on the part of the soldiers, individual desertions became frequent in the army, and there did not now remain to Napoleon more than 40,000 men. The idea of these 40,000, led on by him, and possibly sustained by the Parisians, caused an indescribable terror to the 200,000 allied troops that were at Paris, and who were about to be joined by 200,000 more; they knew no rest whilst they entertained a doubt on the subject. Alexander, with his characteristic mobility, passing suddenly from extreme confidence to extreme

* M. de Caulaincourt, who knew the author of this treason, did not wish to entail on him the contempt of posterity, and forbore to record his name in his memoirs.

distrust, thought he had been deceived by Napoleon's representatives, and even forgetting M. de Caulaincourt's stainless honour, suspected that fidelity to his master had stifled his sincerity, and that he and the two marshals had come to Paris to hide a great military manœuvre. This suspicion might have had some foundation when they first came to Paris a few days before, and had not pledged their word, but at the actual time it was an illusion conjured up by fear. Alexander sent for the three plenipotentiaries, expressed his discontent, and even went so far as to say, that had he followed his first impulse, and the advice of his allies, he would have had them arrested. M. de Caulaincourt haughtily rejected the suspicions cast upon him; he said that after the generous frankness the Russian monarch had displayed in treating with them, they would have scorned to become accomplices even in a *ruse de guerre*—he asserted that the allied sovereigns had been shamefully misled, and offered to become a prisoner until the truth should be ascertained. Alexander did not accept this offer, and to prove that his suspicions had not been lightly conceived, he told M. de Caulaincourt the name of the informer. The latter was indignant, and it was instantly agreed that officers should be sent to Fontainebleau to make inquiries. Some hours after, these officers returned with an exact report of what had passed. According to their report, the affair had consisted of a kind of military sedition, that had died out of itself, Napoleon not wishing to profit by it.

Here was an additional reason for hastening the *dénouement*. But this was not the sole cause, for every moment reports were spread of the arrival of the Count d'Artois, and should this prince once enter Paris, received, as he would undoubtedly be, with the loud acclamations that ever welcome new arrivals, it might become impossible to obtain anything for Napoleon. Alexander had indeed promised not to admit the Count d'Artois into Paris before the conventions relative to the imperial family should be signed, and this was an additional reason for despatch. Matters were accordingly expedited. In the first place, it was thought unwise to live under a tacit armistice, which might at any moment be broken without criminating any one. A formal armistice was therefore drawn up for all the armies, and particularly for that encamped round Fontainebleau. Touching the latter, it was agreed that it should be separated from the allied troops by the Seine, from Fontainebleau to Essonne; from this place, the river of the same name should form a line of demarcation as far as the cantonments extended. This armistice signed, the arrangements for Napoleon and his family were proceeded with.

The cession of the isle of Elba, though more than once con-

tested at the instigation of M. Fouché and the Austrian ministers, was not questioned, thanks to the decided opinion pronounced by Alexander. It was agreed that Napoleon should be sole sovereign of this island, and retain during his life the title by which he was known to the world—that of emperor. It was also agreed that he should be accompanied by seven or eight hundred men of the old guard, who should serve both as an escort of honour and a means of defence. The next question under consideration was a provision for Marie Louise and her son. M. de Metternich had arrived the 10th April, and refused Tuscany, saying that Alexander's willingness to give up that province was only being generous at the expense of others. Parma and Plaisance were assigned to the mother and son. Next came the pecuniary arrangements. Napoleon was to have an annual income of two millions, and a like sum was to be divided between his brothers and sisters. These sums were to be partly obtained from the French treasury, and partly from the immense revenues of the countries yielded by France. On these conditions Napoleon pledged himself to give up the entire treasury extraordinary as well as the crown diamonds. Out of this treasury extraordinary he was allowed to distribute two millions in ready money to officers whose services he wished to recompense. A principality was promised to Prince Eugène when the territorial question should be definitely settled. Lastly, the Empress Josephine was to receive her pension, which was reduced to a million.

It was only after protracted debates that these arrangements were adopted. The provisional government opposed them, not on account of the extent of the pecuniary sacrifices involved, but on account of the implied recognition of the imperial reign. Alexander wished that Napoleon's representatives should meet M. de Talleyrand and the allied ministers in a general assembly. The discussion was warm, and Marshal Macdonald, whom the petty details of this discussion rendered indignant, energetically supported the cause of the imperial family. At length the insolence and pride of M. de Caulaincourt, which surpassed even the habitual haughtiness of M. de Talleyrand, put an end to the debate, and the general conditions were agreed on. It was the 10th April, and the approaching arrival of the Count d'Artois was announced.

On the 11th, there was a general assembly of the ministers of the different powers, of the members of the provisional government, and of Napoleon's representatives. The treaty was signed by the ministers of the allied monarchs, in separate copies, and M. de Talleyrand, in the name of the royal government, without adhering to the treaty himself, guaranteed the execution of the conditions that concerned France. M. de

Caulaincourt then, for the first time, produced the act of abdication, and presented it to M. de Talleyrand, by whom it was received with undisguised joy.

Such was the end of the greatest power that had reigned in Europe since the days of Charlemagne; and the conqueror who had signed the treaties of Campo-Formio, of Lunéville, of Vienna, of Tilsit, of Bayonne, and of Presburg, was obliged to accept, through the medium of his noble-minded representative, not the treaty of Chatillon, which he was perfectly right to refuse, but the treaty of the 11th April, which accorded to him the isle of Elba, with a pension for himself and his family; terrible example of the chastisement that Fortune reserves for those who allow themselves to be intoxicated by her favours!

These signatures being exchanged, M. de Talleyrand, with a mixture of dignity and courtesy, said to the three envoys of Napoleon, that their duty towards their unhappy master being amply fulfilled, the government now reckoned on their adhesion and attached importance to it, on account of their personal merit and high reputation. To this speech M. de Caulaincourt replied, that his duty to Napoleon would not be fully discharged until all the subscribed conditions should have been fulfilled. Marshal Ney replied that he had already given in his adhesion to the Bourbon government, and was ready to repeat the act. "I," said Marshal Macdonald, "shall follow the example of M. de Caulaincourt." After these explanations the meeting broke up, and M. de Caulaincourt, accompanied by Marshal Macdonald, set off immediately for Fontainebleau.

Shortly before the treaty of the 11th April was signed, Napoleon demanded from M. de Caulaincourt that he should send back the act of abdication. Though he was in no way deceived as to the sentiments of Austria, and understood perfectly well that Francis II., though loving his daughter, would prefer the interests of his empire to hers, he had still flattered himself that if Marie Louise had an interview with her father, she would obtain something, perhaps Tuscany, to which he attached special importance as being in the neighbourhood of the isle of Elba. He therefore advised her, in the secret correspondence kept up between them, to apply to the Emperor Francis. Marie Louise, following this advice, sent several emissaries to Dijon, and received from her father protestations of tenderness of a nature to inspire hope. At the same time, erroneous information received by Napoleon made him believe that Francis II. disapproved the haste with which the regency of Marie Louise had been condemned for the benefit of the Bourbons. It was in consequence of this erroneous information that Napoleon had recalled his act of abdication, but without insisting on it, for he soon discovered the shallowness of the

information he had received. M. de Caulaincourt had flatly refused to break off the negotiations. Napoleon, appreciating his motives of action, received M. de Caulaincourt and Marshal Macdonald with much cordiality and many expressions of gratitude. He took the treaty from their hands, read it, and approved of it, with the exception of the refusal of Tuscany, which he regretted. He thanked his two negotiators warmly, especially Marshal Macdonald, from whom he could not have expected such friendly conduct. He afterwards dismissed both, as if desirous of taking some repose, and wished to defer until the morrow the renewal of the conversation.

Scarcely had the negotiators left than the emperor, according to his wont, recalled M. de Caulaincourt, anxious to pour forth his feelings in the confidence of friendship. He was calm, more gentle than ordinary, and there was something solemn in his tone and gesture. During the late extraordinary events M. de Caulaincourt had profoundly admired the mental strength with which Napoleon had restrained his emotions, and raised himself, so to speak, on the wings of his genius, above sublunary things; but he seemed at the present moment to rise higher than ever, and spoke of passing events with extraordinary disinterestedness. He again thanked M. de Caulaincourt, and this time personally, for his conduct, which had inspired him with the deepest sense of gratitude, but not the slightest surprise. He repeated that the treaty had amply provided for his family, and afforded more than enough for him, who really wanted nothing, but at the same time he expressed his regret about Tuscany. "It is a fine principality," he said, "and would have suited my son. On this throne, where mental power is hereditary, my son might have been happy, happier, perhaps, than on the throne of France, continually exposed to revolutionary storms, and where my race has only one claim—victory. Besides, this throne would have been necessary to my wife. I know her; she is good-hearted, but weak-minded and frivolous. My dear Caulaincourt," he added, "Cæsar might again return to the rank of a citizen, but his empress could scarcely surrender the rank of Cæsar's wife. Marie Louise would have found at Florence something of the splendour with which she was surrounded at Paris. She would only have had to cross the Piombino Canal to pay me a visit; my prison would have been, as it were, enlocked in her States; under these circumstances I could have hoped to see her, I might even have been able to visit her, and when the European powers would have been convinced that I had renounced the world, and like a new Sancho, *I only thought of the welfare of my island*, they would have sanctioned these little trips; I should have enjoyed a happiness of which I knew little amid all the splendour of my glory. But now

that my wife would be obliged to come from Parma, and traverse so many foreign States to come to me—God only knows. But let us quit this subject. You have done all you could, and I thank you; Austria is utterly heartless."

The emperor again pressed M. de Caulaincourt's hand, and spoke of his entire life with extraordinary impartiality and incomparable greatness of mind.

He acknowledged that he had deceived himself, that, enamoured of France, of the rank she held in the world, and of the higher rank she might attain, he had wished to raise with her and for her a sovereign empire upon which all the other empires of Europe would have been dependent, and he acknowledged that after having almost realised this glorious dream, he had not had the good sense to pause at the limit traced by the nature of things. He afterwards spoke of his generals, recalled Massena to memory, and declared that of all his lieutenants he had performed the highest deeds; he did not speak of the campaign in Portugal, only too well justified, alas! by our misfortune in the Peninsula, but he repeated what he had already said more than once, that there was one thing wanted to the noble defence of Genoa in 1800, and that was twenty-four hours' longer resistance. He spoke of Suchet, of his profound wisdom in war and administration, said something of Marshal Soult and his ambition, did not utter a word about Davout, of whom he had lost sight for the past two years, and who at that very moment was performing at Hamburg prodigies of valour, of which France knew nothing; he afterwards spoke of Berthier, of his good sense, his honesty, and his rare talents as head of the staff. "I loved him," he said, "and he has just caused me great pain of mind. I begged him to pass some time with me in the isle of Elba, and he did not seem willing to consent, and yet I would not have retained him long. Do you suppose that I would wish to prolong indefinitely an idle and useless life? This proof of devotedness might not have cost him much; but his heart is broken, he is a father, he thinks of his children; he fancies he might be able to keep the principality of Neufchâtel, he is mistaken, but his error is excusable. I love Berthier, I shall never cease to love him. Ah, Caulaincourt, without being indulgent, it is impossible to judge men correctly, and above all, to govern them!" Then Napoleon spoke of his other generals; he named Gerard and Clausel as the hope of the French army, and made some reflections, not bitter, but sad, on the eagerness exhibited by certain officers to abandon him. "Why do they not act frankly?" he said. "I see their desire, their embarrassment, I try to put them at their ease, I tell them they have nothing more to do but to enter the service of the Bourbons, and instead of profiting of the offered opportunity, they make

me empty protestations of fidelity, and afterwards send their adhesion underhand to Paris, and frame a pretext for leaving me. I detest dissimulation. It is very natural that old soldiers covered with wounds should seek to preserve under the new government the reward of the services they have rendered to France! Why deny their motives of action? But men never see clearly what they ought to do, and what is due to them; they seldom speak or act consistently. My brave Druot is very different. He is not satisfied, I see it clearly, but it is not through personal feeling, but on account of our poor France. He is not pleased with me, but he will, however, remain with me, less through personal affection for me than through respect for himself. Druot! Druot! he is virtue itself!"

Napoleon spoke afterwards of his ministers. He appeared to feel that not one of them had come from Blois to bid him farewell. He spoke of the Duke de Feltre as he had always thought of him, which was not very flattering. He spoke highly of the honesty, knowledge, and attention to business displayed by the Duke de Gaete and Count Mollien. He afterwards expatiated on the character of Admiral Decrès. Though he had no personal affection for this minister, he seemed to attach an importance to him proportionate to his abilities. "He is hard-hearted, pitiless in his remarks," said Napoleon; "he takes pleasure in making himself detested; but he is of a high order of mind. The misfortunes that befell the navy are not attributable to him, but to circumstances. He prepared, with very little expense, a magnificent fleet. Caulaincourt, I had one hundred and twenty ships of the line. England, whilst walking over the waters, did not sleep. She has done me much harm, undoubtedly; but I have left a poisoned arrow in her side. It is I who augmented that national debt that will press on future generations, and will become an unceasingly oppressive, if not overwhelming, burden to her." Napoleon also spoke of M. de Bassano, M. de Talleyrand, and the Duke of Otranto. "Bassano is falsely accused," he said; "but in all ages a victim has been sacrificed to public opinion. My most serious resolves have been imputed to him. You know—you, who have seen all, know how it really is. He is an honest man, well informed, industrious, devoted, and of inviolable fidelity. He has not Talleyrand's *esprit*, but he is far better. Talleyrand, whatever may be said to the contrary, has not opposed me a whit more than Bassano in the acts with which I am reproached. He has just found a part suited to him, and has invested himself with it. As to the rest, it is to be wished that the Bourbons would govern in his spirit. He will be a valuable adviser for them; but they are no more capable of keeping him six months than he is of remaining six months with them. Fouché is a wretch.

He will go about busying himself, and will embroil everything. He hates me intensely, and fears me as much. That is why he would wish to see me at the extremity of the ocean."

This conversation was interminable, and M. de Caulaincourt admired Napoleon's judgment—impartial, but generally indulgent, in which there appeared scarcely a trace of human passion. At this moment Count Orloff was announced; he brought the ratification of the treaty of the 11th April, which the Emperor Alexander had had the courtesy to forward immediately. Napoleon appeared annoyed at this, and did not wish to part with M. de Caulaincourt, nor was he very anxious to place his signature to such an act. He continued the conversation, and after having spoken of others, he spoke of himself, of his position, and said with an accent of profound grief—"Undoubtedly I suffer, but amid my many causes of grief there is one which exceeds all the rest; it is the idea of finishing my career by signing a treaty in which I have not been able to stipulate one general interest, not even one moral interest, such as the preservation of our colours, or the maintenance of the Legion of Honour; to sign a treaty by which I receive money. Ah, Caulaincourt, but for my son, my wife, my sisters, my brothers, Josephine, Eugène, Hortense, I would tear the treaty in a thousand pieces! Ah, if my generals, who so long displayed such great courage, had only been courageous two hours longer, I would have changed our destinies. If even this contemptible Senate, which, apart from me, has no power to negotiate, had not taken my place, if I had been allowed to stipulate conditions for France, with the force I still retained, with the fear I still inspired, I would have turned our defeat to a very different purpose. I would have obtained something for France, and afterwards sunk into oblivion myself. But to leave France so little, after having received her so great! What misery!"

And Napoleon seemed overwhelmed by the weight of his reflection. In contemplating the faults of others he beheld his own, for, in fact, if his generals had at last refused to follow him, it was because he had exhausted them; if the Senate had not allowed him to act, it was because they felt the necessity of snatching the power from his hands, in order to terminate a fearful crisis. He perceived all these truths without giving them utterance; and in judging, he punished himself, for it is so that Providence chastises the man of genius—deputing to him the task of self-condemnation, of self-torture, by the clearness with which he views the past and future. Then, with still greater grief, Napoleon added—"And these humiliations are not the last. I am about to traverse these southern provinces where men's passions are so violent. Let the Bourbons get me assassinated—I can pardon that; but I shall be perhaps

abandoned to the insults of this abominable populace of the south. To die on the field of battle is nothing, but amid filth and by such hands!"

Napoleon seemed at this moment to foresee with horror, not death, which he was accustomed to brave, but degrading punishment. Observing that the conversation had lasted very long, he apologised for having detained M. de Caulaincourt, and dismissed him with the most affectionate expressions, saying he should send, did he need him again. M. de Caulaincourt left, profoundly impressed by what he had heard, and seeing, as he thought, in these long recapitulations, and in the emperor's decisive judgment on himself and others, an adieu to worldly pomp, but not to life. He was mistaken. Napoleon himself believed that he was bidding farewell to life when he poured forth his feelings in that manner. He had, in fact, taken the strange resolution, one wholly unworthy of him, of committing suicide. Persons of an active temperament rarely conceive a disgust of life; they make too much occupation for themselves to wish to renounce existence. Napoleon, who was one of the most active of the human race, had therefore no suicidal tendencies; he, on the contrary, despised self-destruction as a reckless renunciation of the chances the future may present, chances that are as numerous as unexpected for him who knows how to bear up under the temporary burden of evil days. Nevertheless, in adversity, even when most courageously supported, there are moments of dejection when the mind and the heart bow beneath the weight of misfortune.

Napoleon experienced on this day one of those moments of insurmountable depression. The treaty relative to his family being signed, the honour of the sovereigns pledged for its fulfilment, he believed that his son, his wife, and relations were provided for, and he thought he had fulfilled his last duties. It seemed to him that for honest people his death would impress on the engagement he had signed a sacred character, and that ceasing to fear, they would also cease to hate him. Therefore believing his career at an end, and feeling it impossible to realise the idea of existence in a small Mediterranean island where he would only breathe the hot air of Italy, not even reckoning on the sweet ties of home affections—for in this moment of sinister clairvoyance he foresaw that he would be deprived of his son, of his wife; humiliated at being obliged to sign a treaty, exclusively personal, and in point of fact, pecuniary; wearied of hearing every day the murmurs of public maledictions, beholding with horror the prospect of being abandoned to the insults of a despicable populace, he for a moment detested life, and resolved to have recourse to poison which he had long kept in his possession to be used

in extremity. In Russia, on the morning of the sanguinary battle of Malo-Jaroslawetz, after the sudden irruption of the Cossacks, which had involved him in personal danger, he foresaw the possibility of becoming a prisoner to the Russians, and requested Dr. Yvan to supply him a strong draught of opium, as a means of escaping the intolerable torture of adorning the conqueror's car. Dr. Yvan, understanding the necessity of such a precaution, prepared the required dose, and took the precaution of enclosing it in a little bag, so that the emperor could always carry it about with him. On his return to France, Napoleon did not wish to destroy it, and had placed the poison amongst his travelling equipments, where it still remained.

At the close of the day, occupied by these overwhelming reflections, seeing his family provided for, and as he believed, doing them no injury by his death, he selected this night of the 11th April to escape the labour of life, which he could no longer support, after having drawn it so heavily upon him; taking from his travelling apparatus the formidable dose, he diluted it with a little water, swallowed it, and then lay back in his bed, where he believed he was about to take his last sleep.

Awaiting thus the effects of the poison, he wished to bid a last adieu to M. de Caulaincourt, and above all, express his last wishes with regard to his wife and son. He had M. de Caulaincourt called about three in the morning, and apologising for disturbing his sleep, said he had some important instructions to add to those he had already given. His features were scarcely distinguishable in the fading light; his voice was weak and changed in tone. Without mentioning what he had done, he took from under his pillow a letter and a portfolio, and presenting them to M. de Caulaincourt, he said—"This portfolio and this letter are intended for my wife and son, and I pray you to deliver them with your own hand. My wife and son will both stand in need of your prudent and honest advice, for their position will soon be perilous, and I beg you not to abandon them. This case, pointing to his travelling case, is to be given to Eugène. Tell Josephine I thought of her before quitting the world. Keep this cameo in remembrance of me. You are an honest man, you have always told me the truth. Embrace me." At these last words, which could leave no doubt as to the resolution adopted by Napoleon, M. de Caulaincourt, though not easily moved, seized the hands of his master, and bathed them with tears. He suddenly perceived a glass near the emperor, in which there were still some traces of the deadly draught. He questioned the emperor, whose sole reply was to beg him to restrain his feelings, not to quit him, but allow him to finish his agony in peace. M. de Caulaincourt endeavoured

to escape and call for assistance. Napoleon first entreated, then commanded him to do nothing of the kind; he did not desire any commotion, he did not wish that a stranger eye should gaze upon his death-stamped features.

M. de Caulaincourt seemed paralysed, and remained standing near the bed where that wondrous life was about to be terminated, when Napoleon's face became suddenly convulsed. He was suffering intensely, but endeavoured to resist the pain. Violent spasms soon came on, indicative of approaching discharges of the stomach. After resisting for some time this natural movement, Napoleon was obliged to yield. A part of the dose he had taken was thrown up in a silver basin held by M. de Caulaincourt. The latter profited of this opportunity to withdraw for a moment and call assistance. Dr. Yvan came quickly. In his presence everything was explained. Napoleon begged a last service from the physician, it was to renew the dose of opium, as he feared that which remained in his stomach might not be sufficient to effect his object. Dr. Yvan appeared horrified at the proposal. He had in Russia supplied his master with poison, to furnish him with the means of escaping from a fearful position, but he bitterly regretted having done so, and now, when Napoleon insisted on the renewal of the dose, he fled from the chamber and did not return. At this moment General Bertrand and M. de Bassano arrived. Napoleon begged they would not divulge this sad episode of his life, which he still hoped would be the last. In fact, there was every reason to believe so; for he seemed very much sunken and almost exhausted. He fell into a lethargy which lasted several hours.

His faithful servants stood round, motionless and dismayed. From time to time the emperor experienced dreadful pains of the stomach, and said several times—"How difficult death is here, and how easy on the field of battle! Ah, why did I not die at Arcis-sur-Aube!"

Night closed without bringing fresh misfortunes. Napoleon began to believe that he had not reached the term of his life, and the devoted friends that surrounded him hoped so too; they were happy that he had escaped death, though believing that life could possess little attraction for him now. During these proceedings Marshal Macdonald was announced. He was desirous, before quitting Fontainebleau, to pay his respects to the deposed emperor. "I would willingly receive this worthy man," said Napoleon, "but he must wait a little. I would not wish him to see me in my present condition." Count Orloff awaited the ratifications for which he had come. It was the morning of the 12th; at this hour the Count d'Artois was about to enter Paris, and many persons were eager to quit

Fontainebleau. Napoleon wished to recover a little before admitting any one into his presence.

After a lethargy of considerable length, M. de Caulaincourt and one of the three personages initiated in the secret of the poisoning took Napoleon in their arms and placed him near an open window. The air sensibly revived him. "Fate has decided it," he said to M. de Caulaincourt; "I must live and await what Providence has appointed me." He then consented to receive Marshal Macdonald. The latter was introduced without being informed of the carefully guarded secret. He found Napoleon lying on a *chaise-longue*, and was horrified at the state of exhaustion in which he was. He respectfully expressed his concern.* Napoleon affected to attribute his illness to an affection of the stomach, to which he was subject, and which already announced the malady of which he died. He affectionately pressed the marshal's hand. "You are," he said, "an honest man, whose generous conduct towards me I appreciate, and I would I could testify my gratitude towards you otherwise than by words. But honours are no longer at my disposal; money I have not; and besides, it would not be worthy of your acceptance. But I can offer you a token of remembrance, which will, I hope, be acceptable." He then asked for a sword that was lying near his pillow, and presenting it to the marshal, said—"This is the sword of Mourad Bey; it was one of the trophies of the battle of Aboukir; I have often worn it. You will keep it in remembrance of our late transactions, and you will transmit it to your children." The marshal accepted this generous gift with profound emotion; he embraced the emperor with intense feeling. They separated never to meet again, though neither had finished his career. The marshal set off immediately for Paris. Berthier had also left, promising to return, but in a manner that had not convinced his old master. "You will see that he will not come back," said Napoleon sadly, but without bitterness.

During this interval, M. de Caulaincourt had at length found time to remit to Count Orloff the ratification of the 11th of April, with the imperial signature attached. He returned to Napoleon, who had just received an extremely affectionate letter from Marie Louise. This letter gave him the most gratifying intelligence of his son, and expressed boundless devotedness on the part of the empress, who declared her determination of joining him as soon as possible. This letter produced an extraordinary effect on Napoleon. It in some sort recalled him to life. It was as though a new existence had been presented to his powerful imagination. "Providence has decreed it," he said to M. de Caulaincourt; "I will live—who can

* This is the marshal's own recital in his still manuscript memoirs.

penetrate the future? Besides, my wife, my son will be all-sufficient for me. I shall see them—I hope I shall see them often. When the allied powers will be convinced that I have no thought of quitting my retreat they will allow me to see my family, perhaps to visit them; and then I shall write the history of what we have done. Caulaincourt," he cried, "I shall immortalise your names." He afterwards added, "Even that is a reason for living."

Then with extraordinary mobility of feeling, filled with sudden affection for this new existence, whose image was presented to his imagination, he busied himself in the details of his establishment at the isle of Elba, and wished that M. de Caulaincourt should go in person, either to Marie Louise or the sovereigns, to arrange the mode in which his wife should join him. He had not thought of keeping any money for himself; the military chest had been exhausted in paying the soldiers. Some millions remained in the possession of Marie Louise. Napoleon intended to leave her this sum, that she might not be forced to ask pecuniary aid from any one, and especially from her father. But when the necessity of drawing on this last remaining fund was proved to Napoleon, he consented to participate in these millions. He deputed M. de Caulaincourt to visit the empress, and again advise her to ask an interview with the Emperor Francis, who perhaps, touched by her presence, would accord her Tuscany. She was afterwards to join her husband by Orleans on the Bourbonnais route. Napoleon reiterated his injunctions to M. de Caulaincourt not to press Marie Louise to join him, but allow her sentiments on this subject to rise spontaneously from her heart; "For," he repeated several times, "I understand women well, and particularly Marie Louise. To offer her a prison instead of the court of France, such as I made it, would be a terrible trial. If she came, looking sad and dejected, I should be miserable. I prefer solitude to the sight of sadness or despondency. If my wife's feelings impel her to come to me, I shall receive her with open arms; if not, let her remain at Parma or Florence, where she will ultimately reign. I shall only ask her to let me have my son."

After giving utterance to these scruples, Napoleon applied himself to the details of his journey. It was agreed that he should be accompanied to the isle of Elba by the commissioners of the allied powers, and he appeared to set especial importance on the presence of the English commissioner. "The English," he said, "are a free people, and respect themselves." Having arranged all these details, he took leave of M. de Caulaincourt, repeating his assurance of absolute confidence and eternal gratitude. M. de Caulaincourt set out to fulfil his mission to Marie Louise and the sovereigns.

Whilst this mournful scene took place at Fontainebleau, a very different one was being enacted at Paris; for amid the unceasing vicissitudes of this life, joy, in her perpetual rounds, sometimes lights up suddenly faces long shaded by woe, withdrawing her radiance from features on which she had long shone, and which now lapse into midnight gloom. In fact, the Count d'Artois, who was then making his solemn entry into Paris, was surrounded by excited, eager, welcoming crowds.

M. de Vitrolles joined the prince on the 7th. He found him at Nancy, assisting at a *Te Deum*, sung to celebrate what was called the deliverance of France. The Count d'Artois was seized with a very natural emotion when he learned that he was about to enter Paris, from which he had fled in 1790, and absent from which he had lived proscribed about a quarter of a century. He was surrounded by some faithful friends—MM. François d'Escars, Jules de Polignac, Roger de Damas, de Bruges, l'Abbé de Latil, all of whom sympathised in his joy, and prepared to accompany him to the capital. The prince left Count Roger de Damas at Nancy, where, under the title of governor, he was to assume the administration of Lorraine; and after having provided a uniform of the national guard, he set out, that he might be in the neighbourhood of Paris on the day appointed for his entry.

The provinces through which the prince and his suite journeyed were horribly devastated. Putrid bodies of men and horses filled the air with pestilence; farm-houses were reduced to ashes; bridges were barricaded or cut down; the population had taken flight or were hidden, and some ran to the roadside on hearing the noise of wheels different from those of cannon. They were entranced with joy on hearing intelligence of peace, and astonished when they learned the return of the Bourbons. The people evinced no pleasure on hearing the name of these princes, for in the eastern provinces Napoleon was still regarded by the inhabitants as the defender of their native land, though his policy had drawn foreigners thither. When the royal suite arrived at Chalons the place was empty. At Meaux, the bishop, the prefect, the public functionaries, and the principal inhabitants quitted the city that they might not be present at the arrival of the prince. However, when the Count d'Artois succeeded in making himself seen or heard, he never failed to make an agreeable impression. Possessing little learning, but endowed with a remarkable facility of expression, perfect gracefulness of demeanour, and a noble face, to which an aquiline nose and hanging lip gave the distinctive characteristics of his family—a marked expression of goodness and a great desire to please, rendered him universally attractive. At Chalons and Meaux

he eventually dissipated the coldness of those with whom he succeeded in obtaining an interview, and left them much better disposed than he had found them.

As he drew near Paris, M. de Vitrolles received a letter from M. de Talleyrand, informing him of what had taken place; that is to say, the adoption and publication of the constitution of the Senate, the obligation imposed on the king of swearing to this constitution before being invested with the royal power, and the consequent obligation on the part of the Count d'Artois to take some pledge before being recognised as lieutenant-general of the kingdom, and lastly, the universal desire of sensible people, and especially of the allied sovereigns, to see the tricolor cockade assumed by the Bourbon princes. No sooner had M. de Vitrolles received this letter than he ran to the Count d'Artois, exclaiming loudly against what he called the indifference, the frivolity of M. de Talleyrand, who, he said, was not able to resist any request, and for want of firmness in his view, promised sometimes to one, sometimes to another, and did not keep his word with any. The Count d'Artois was at this moment so elated with joy, that it would be difficult to mingle a feeling of sadness with his exultation. Both he and his friends entertained an instinctive repugnance to the tricolor cockade, but the constitutional subtilties troubled them less; and the Count d'Artois, astonished at the indignation of M. de Vitrolles, asked him whether what he heard was really sufficiently bad to make him take fire as he did, and above all, to make such an outcry. The prince undertook personally to calm M. de Vitrolles, and it was agreed that the latter should go secretly to Paris, to remove or elude the principal difficulties. Meanwhile the prince continued his journey, and passed the night at the Chateau de Livry.

M. de Vitrolles having on the evening of the 11th reached M. de Talleyrand's, Rue St. Florentin, he found everything as he had left it—that is to say, in extreme confusion. In the court there were Cossacks stretched on straw; on the first floor the Emperor Alexander, surrounded by his staff; on the entresol, the provisional governor; in one apartment the members of the government, in another some copyists; and M. de Talleyrand, sometimes in one chamber, sometimes in another, receiving petitioners with a bland smile, and advisers with a shake of the head that involved no pledge, being as little conclusive as possible, leaving things to time, which certainly does much, but does not do everything. M. de Vitrolles, always very active, but less yielding in proportion as his prince drew nearer Paris, flew into a violent passion against the tricolor cockade and against the oath required of King Louis XVIII. before being invested with royal power. He seemed to say

that the crown would be refused on such conditions. The colourless and ironical countenance of M. de Talleyrand presented a great stumbling-block to headlong talkers; he smiled at the threats uttered by M. de Vitrolles, and then proceeded to explanations.

Touching the cockade, a singular accident, whether fortuitous or concerted, had occurred, which had very much simplified the difficulty. Scarcely had the constitution been proclaimed, when many royalists, intoxicated with joy, hastened to the provinces, announcing the return of the Bourbons, and wearing the white cockade in their hats, as if this emblem was to be henceforth universally adopted. Two or three of these went to Rouen, where Marshal Jourdan commanded a military division. This marshal, whose aversion to the empire, and whose liberal and monarchical opinions disposed him to look favourably on the return of the Bourbons, if restricted by good laws, had shown himself willing to subscribe to the acts of the Senate; he was, moreover, told that the white cockade had been adopted at Paris; and Marshal Jourdan, attaching importance only to the essential act—the recall of the Bourbons, with a liberal constitution—made an address to his troops, announcing to them the new revolution, inviting them to give in their adhesion and assume the white cockade. He gave them the example by displaying one himself. Having only to do with scattered detachments and thinly supplied depôts, the marshal met no resistance. The white cockade had been accepted by the troops, and the information was circulated in Paris as a conclusive fact; so that the people of Rouen assumed the white cockade believing they were following the example of the Parisians, and the Parisians did the same fancying they were sanctioned by the example of the inhabitants of Rouen. Thus the question being looked on as decided, an order was issued on the 9th, commanding the Parisian national guard to assume the white cockade, though that body had at first abhorred the idea. On this point the difficulty was nearly surmounted—at least, as far as the Parisian guard was concerned; and as the Count d'Artois was to wear the uniform of this guard, which was tricolor, it was hoped that a kind of compromise had been effected between the two cockades. It was therefore arranged that the Count d'Artois should enter the city wearing the white cockade in his hat, and dressed in the tricolor uniform of the national guard.

As to the constitution, the arrangement was more difficult. M. de Talleyrand, de Jaucourt, and de Dalberg, members of the provisional government, discussed the question with M. de Vitrolles, and did not know in what way to resolve the difficulty. During these proceedings, some of the many frequenters of the

house having called at M. de Talleyrand's, they were admitted to the consultation, where the great difficulty was to make the Count d'Artois lieutenant-general of the kingdom without violating the decision of the Senate, and without pledging him to an engagement opposed to his wishes, and which he was not authorised to take, not having had time to consult Louis XVIII. An expedient presented itself; this was, that M. de Talleyrand should give in his resignation as president of the provisional government, and transfer this presidency to the Count d'Artois. But even in this case the intervention of the Senate would be needed, and to obtain it some connection should be formed with that body. Wearied by the recurrence of so many difficulties, M. de Talleyrand said to M. de Vitrolles, "Enter Paris first, and we shall consider the rest afterwards." Thus, according to his custom, he allowed things to take their own course, when he was not able to arrange them himself.

M. de Vitrolles returned on the evening of the 11th to the Castle of Livry, after having arranged that on the next day, the 12th April, the Count d'Artois should make his entry into Paris. M. de Talleyrand had then at his command M. Ouvrard, who had just issued from the imperial prisons, and who had been always renowned for his luxurious habits. This gentleman M. de Talleyrand deputed to make arrangements for the reception of the prince at Livry. The cavalry national guard, with six hundred infantry of the same corps, were sent to Livry to serve as an escort of honour to the prince. The latter, radiant with joy, received them with a cordiality that touched them deeply; and as if he wished to correct the effect of the white cockade displayed in his hat, he told them he had procured at Nancy a uniform similar to theirs, and that he would next day enter Paris dressed like them, and his heart imbued with corresponding sentiments. Cheers replied to these gracious words, and for a moment the representatives of ancient and modern opinions seemed to agree.

On the following day, the 12th, a considerable influx of people had concentrated from early morning on the route and in the streets leading to the Bondy Barriere. Men, born royalists, and those that the Revolution had made such—and these were not a few—were foremost to assist at a spectacle which they never could have anticipated; for after the scaffold of Louis XVI. and the victories of Napoleon, who would have ever believed that Paris would open its gates to receive the Bourbons in triumph? And yet, with a little reflection, it might have been predicted, for we may naturally reckon on abrupt and violent reactionary movements when the rational and legitimate object of revolutions is overstepped. But who reflects, especially amongst the masses? At this period so many persons

had lost their fathers, their brothers, and their children on the scaffold or the field of battle; so many persons had seen their families dispersed and their property devastated, that their emotion was profound at the bare idea of again beholding a prince who was for them a living representative of a time when they were young and believed themselves happy. Under such circumstances, the prince's defects were easily forgotten. In the expectation of beholding the prince thousands of faces exhibited strong emotion, and many were bathed in tears. The prudent bourgeoisie of Paris—always the best representative of public feeling—had been long attached to Napoleon, who had procured them rest combined with glory, and they had become detached from him solely on account of his faults; but they now clearly perceived that Napoleon once overthrown, the Bourbons became his necessary and desirable successors, that the respect which surrounded their title to the throne, that the peace of whose continuance they were a pledge, that the liberty which could be so well combined with their hereditary authority—the bourgeoisie, we say, perceived that all these accompaniments were the pledges of a peaceful and enduring happiness for France. The bourgeoisie, therefore, were animated by the best sentiments towards the Bourbons, and ready to throw themselves into their arms if they exhibited somewhat of good-will and good sense. The pleasing personal appearance of the Count d'Artois was well calculated to ripen these dispositions, and convert them into a universal burst of enthusiasm.

About eleven in the forenoon the Count d'Artois, surrounded by a vast cavalcade, composed of persons of every class, but especially of the ancient nobility, took his way towards the Bondy Barriere. Every moment new-comers, high functionaries, French and foreign officers joined the cortège, and when they became recognised, the ranks opened, that they might reach the prince. The royalists, by whom he was surrounded, were highly elated. If amongst the persons who arrived there were any of the old nobility whose fidelity had for a moment wavered, loud cries of *Vive le roi* burst out at their approach, and proved that forgetfulness was not a royalist quality, even with regard to one another. M. de Montmorency, who had joined the empire when everybody in France did so, and now held the rank of assistant-major-general in the national guard, arrived with his *chef*, General Dessoles, and was assailed with affected cries of *Vive le roi*, as if it were needful to teach a Montmorency affection for the Bourbons. As the cortège approached the barrier, a group of horsemen was seen in full uniform, and wearing the tricolor panache; this group consisted of the Marshals Ney, Marmont, Moncey, Kellermann,

Sérurier, who had not laid aside the colours which were still those of the army. Shouts were again raised, but without violence, for an infallible instinct taught even the most impassioned friends of the prince that in the presence of these formidable men it was better to restrain their feelings. Marshal Ney headed the group. His strongly marked features, violently contracted, revealed a feeling of discomfort, but without the slightest admixture of fear, for no person had dared to fail in respect towards him. At the cry of the "marshals," the ranks of the royal cortège instantly opened, and a passage was formed. The Count d'Artois, quickening his horse's pace, advanced towards the marshals and pressed the hand of each. "Gentlemen," he said, "you are very welcome; you, who have spread in every quarter the glory of France. Believe me, my brother and I have not been the last to applaud your high deeds." Marshal Ney, being placed near the prince, at whose reception he was much gratified, was soon more at his ease. The provisional government, headed by the president, waited at the barrier to conduct the prince to the gates of the capital. M. de Talleyrand pronounced some courteous phrases, respectful and sententious, to which the prince replied by highly appropriate expressions, inspired by the circumstances of the moment. The cortège then wended its way towards Nôtre Dame, passing through the finest streets of Paris. In the suburbs the spectacle was not very cheerful, but it was otherwise on the Boulevards. The citizens, filled with hope of peace and rest, powerfully touched by a thousand memories that came thronging to their minds, and fascinated by the graceful demeanour of the prince, gave him a most cordial reception. The emotion increased as the cavalcade drew near the cathedral. At the gate, the prince was received by the Chapter. Care had been taken to remove Cardinal Maury, Archbishop of Paris, *non-institué*, by overloading him with insults during eight days in the Parisian journals. Thus the intrepid defender of the royal cause in the Constituante Assembly was so severely visited for some acts of weakness towards the empire, that he was not included in the act of oblivion promised to all. The prince, being conducted to the royal fauteuil beneath the daïs, became even in the church the object of noisy demonstrations. All the grand functionaries of the State, all the staffs were assembled in the basilisk; the Senate alone was absent. The senators, at length resuming their dignity, which they ought never to have laid aside, did not wish to take part in any ceremony that might imply, on their part, a recognition of the authority of the Bourbons until the latter should have pledged themselves to maintain the constitution. Fresh exclamations broke forth when the clergy pronounced the solemn words, "*Domine, salvum fac regem Ludovicum*," and

the Count d'Artois, who had not heard these words pronounced since his royal brother had lost his head on the scaffold, could not restrain his tears.

The ceremony being terminated, the Count d'Artois was conducted to the Tuileries, amid crowds still uttering enthusiastic acclamations. Arrived at the palace of his fathers, the emotion of the prince became so strong that he could no longer support himself; his attendants, with tears in their eyes, hastened to his aid, and the air re-echoed with cries of *Vive le roi.* Having reached the first floor of the palace, he thanked those who had accompanied him, particularly the marshals, who were now to retire. The latter, on quitting the Tuileries, and leaving the prince, surrounded by the high personages of the emigration, already felt that they would be strangers at this court, to whose re-establishment they had so largely contributed, and a look of defiance and regret impressed on their faces gave expression to the sentiments of their hearts! *

The impression produced in the capital by the proceedings of the day was intense. The prince had no doubt contributed to this by the gracefulness of his demeanour, by his unaffected emotions, and the appropriateness of his language; but the effect was principally owing to the great memories of the past, so powerfully awakened on the occasion. It seemed as if the nation and the old royal dynasty spoke to each other in these terms: "We have sought our happiness apart from each other, and our paths have lain through blood and ruins; let us be happy, and let us be friends, by making mutual concessions." The two parties did not, indeed, express these sentiments so clearly; but though not exactly defined, they were profoundly felt; and if the same memories, which at this moment so deeply stirred and attracted to mutual good feeling the minds of all, did not soon become a source of discord, France might enjoy under the race of her ancient kings a peaceful liberty. But what profound good sense would have been needed on all sides to produce such an effect. However, it was legitimate to hope for such a result, and it was believed that the great victim at Fontainebleau, immolated through his own fault, for the public welfare, would be sufficient to secure it.

The Tuileries remained open next day, and whoever appeared with a name, no matter whether his rank entitled him to the presentation or not, if he could only say that in such or such circumstances he had seen the princes, and had suffered with them or for them, he was graciously received, and his hand affectionately pressed by the Count d'Artois. Each word uttered by the prince circulated instantly through Paris, and flattery, prompt to aid sentiment, compared his gracious and affable

* This is M. de Vitrolles' own recital.

demeanour with the abrupt and harsh deportment of the deposed usurper. On every side were heard and read perpetual comparisons between the gloomy, distrustful, and often cruel tyranny of the upstart soldier, and the paternal authority, so gentle and confiding, of the ancient legitimate princes. A thousand *jeux d'esprit*, more or less just, were made on this theme. "We have had enough of glory," said M. de Talleyrand to the Count d'Artois; "pray, let us now have honour." Genius had fallen into as much discredit as glory. These two words, "genius" and "glory," so ceaselessly repeated during the last fifteen years, had given place to others in the vocabulary of flatterers, and nothing was now heard of but "right," "legitimacy," and the wisdom of early times. But so it is, each epoch has its fashionable jargon, which becomes a characteristic of the time, but to which we must not attribute more importance than it deserves.

The Bourbons being now installed in the Tuileries, nothing more remained to be done but to remove from France, into the retreat destined for him, the conquered lion, imprisoned at Fontainebleau. M. de Caulaincourt had been deputed to arrange with the foreign sovereigns the details of Napoleon's journey through France, about which some difficulties existed, on account of the southern provinces, through which he would be obliged to pass. It had been agreed that each of the great belligerent powers, Russia, Prussia, Austria, and England, should send a commissioner as representative to Napoleon, to ensure respect for his person and the execution of the treaty of the 11th April. On introducing M. de Schouvaloff as his commissioner, Alexander said to him, in presence of M. de Caulaincourt, "Your head shall answer to me for that of Napoleon, for our honour is at stake, and our first duty is to see that he is treated with proper respect, and arrives in perfect safety at the isle of Elba." The Russian monarch had at the same time sent one of his officers to Marie Louise, that she might not be incommoded either by his Cossacks, nor by the more enthusiastic of the royalists, who were naturally more numerous on the banks of the Loire than elsewhere.

Marie Louise, whom we had left on the Blois route after the battle of Paris, had travelled by short stages, sunk in despair, fearing for her husband's life, her son's crown, and for her own future fate, and through weakness of understanding not able to proportion these fears to the real extent of the danger. She had successively received intelligence of the taking of Paris, Napoleon's return towards the capital, his abdication, and lastly, the appropriation of the Duchy of Parma to her and her son. She had suffered severely during her late vicissitudes; and though not endowed with the strength of mind that prompts to high

resolves, she was gentle and kind; she was sincerely attached to Napoleon, and felt a true maternal tenderness for the King of Rome. The fine Duchy of Parma, where she was to reign independently, was without doubt a certain indemnification for what she was losing; however, she scarcely reflected on that for the moment, and the sight of her husband, fallen from the greatest of thrones into a sort of prison, touched her weak, but not callous mind. Had she followed her own impulses and the advice of Madame de Luçay, she would have hastened at once to Fontainebleau, thrown herself into Napoleon's arms, and never left him. But the desire to see her father, a desire that Napoleon had encouraged in order to obtain Tuscany, made her hesitate. Moreover, an incident, insignificant in itself, had produced a painful impression on her mind, and strongly indisposed her against the Bonapartes. Her brothers-in-law, seeing the enemy approach from the Loire, had advised her to retire beyond, which she was averse to do, and so noisy a scene ensued, that the servants, hearing the outcry, hastened to her assistance. She did not forget this annoyance; and when officers from Alexander and the Emperor Francis came to take her under their protection, she willingly went with them, not suspecting that with her son she was about to become a pledge that the coalition would never yield. It was afterwards arranged that she should go to Rambouillet, to receive the visit of her father before her departure. The protection of Russia and Austria could not save her from a species of insult only too general in times of political catastrophe. In leaving Paris, she had brought with her the remainder of Napoleon's personal treasure, consisting of eighteen millions in gold, silver, and plate. Added to this treasure were the crown diamonds. The eighteen millions were the last remains of what Napoleon had saved out of his Civil List, and the plate was his personal property. Out of these eighteen millions, some millions had been sent him to Fontainebleau, either to pay the army or defray the expenses at headquarters, and in virtue of a formal order from Napoleon himself, Marie Louise had put about two millions into her travelling carriages for her own use. About ten millions were placed in the waggons of the fugitive court. The provisional government being in want of money, conceived the idea of sending emissaries in pursuit of Marie Louise to seize this treasure, under pretext that it was money taken from the public treasury. It was nothing of the kind, but in such cases truth and justice have little weight.

According to another custom, common in similar crises, an enemy was chosen as agent, and he, too, selected from the lower ranks of the administration. This was M. Dudon, who had been expelled from the *Conseil d'Etat* by order of Napoleon. This agent having reached Orleans, seized the ten millions

placed in the treasury waggons, Napoleon's personal plate, and a part of Marie Louise's diamonds, notwithstanding her expostulations and the efforts of the foreign commissioners to spare her such an insult. These imperial spoils were carried to Paris, where the new government was much in need of funds.

From Orleans Marie Louise went to Rambouillet, to await the arrival of her father. The Emperor of Austria had entered Paris on the 15th April, and had been received with great pomp by his allies and very coolly by the Parisians, who did not admire the conduct of the father of the empress. He afterwards went to Rambouillet to see his daughter. He overwhelmed her with demonstrations of tenderness, and endeavoured to persuade her that all her misfortunes were attributable to her husband; that Austria had made every effort to bring about an honourable peace at Prague, at Frankfort, and lastly at Chatillon; that Napoleon had never been willing to subscribe to the conditions; that he was undoubtedly a man of genius, but wholly devoid of reason—one who had forced the European powers to proceed to extremities; that as for him (the Emperor of Austria), he could not have acted otherwise than he had done; that his duty as a sovereign had overlaid his tenderness as a father; but his paternal feelings had not been inactive, for he had procured his daughter a noble principality in Italy; that she should be sovereign there, and could devote herself to her son, and prepare for him a happy and peaceful future; that the most favoured branches of the imperial house were rarely treated so well; that when the present storm should have passed away, if she wished to visit her husband, and even to live with him, she would be free to do so, but at the actual moment the wisest thing would be to remain at Vienna until she should have recovered the effects of the many painful scenes through which she had lately passed; that she would be surrounded by the attentions of her family until she should be ready to go either to Parma or the isle of Elba; but that for the present it would be painful and inconvenient to attempt to join Napoleon, as she would be obliged to traverse France as a prisoner; that to her husband she would be rather an embarrassment than a comfort; that the life, the safety of the conquered and disarmed emperor were a deposit confided to the honour of the allied monarchs; that on this subject she might make her mind easy, and take the advice of passing the first moments of this separation in the endearments of the family circle, and amid the memories of her childhood.

Marie Louise, finding a solace for her weakness in these proposals, which were certainly made in the most affectionate manner, yielded to the wishes of her father, and consented to

go to Vienna, whilst Napoleon took his way to the isle of Elba. She begged M. de Caulaincourt to assure Napoleon of her affection, of her constancy, and of her wish to join him as soon as possible, and bring her son, of whom she promised to take, and of whom she certainly did take, the greatest care.

As to the brothers, sisters, and mother of Napoleon, they had all scattered after Marie Louise's departure, and sought to reach as quickly as possible the frontiers of Switzerland and Italy, in order to escape the insults with which they were threatened. As to the different ministers and agents of the imperial government who had accompanied the regent to Blois, they too scattered, the greater number to go to Paris and give in their adhesion to the acts of the Senate.

Such was the fate of all who belonged to Napoleon in those days. Meanwhile he was at Fontainebleau, perfectly resigned to the rigour of his fate, anxious to see the preparations for his voyage finished—in short, he was anxious to be in the place where he was about to enjoy some kind of rest, though what its nature or duration might be he could not foresee. He each day saw solitude increasing around him. He thought it very natural that people should quit him, for these officers who had always obeyed his commands, except on the last day, were naturally anxious to rally round the Bourbons, in order to preserve the rank which was the just reward of the labours of their life. He only wished they had been a little more frank, and to encourage, he addressed them in the following noble language: "Serve the Bourbons," he said to them, "serve them faithfully; no other course remains to you. If they act wisely, France, under their rule, may be happy and respected. I resisted M. de Caulaincourt's earnest entreaties to make me accept the peace of Chatillon. I was right. For me these conditions were humiliating; they are not so for the Bourbons. They find France as they left her, and may accept her ancient limits without compromising their dignity. Such as she is, France will still be powerful; and though geographically diminished, she will be still as morally great as before by her courage, her arts, and her intellectual influence over the rest of the world. If her territorial extent is diminished, her glory is not. The memory of our victories will remain to her as a monument of imperishable greatness, and which will always have immense weight in the councils of Europe. Serve France under the princes who bring back at this moment fortune, so fickle in times of revolution. Serve France under them as you have done under me. Do not make the task too difficult for them, and leave me, but give me a place in your memory."

Such was the substance of his daily conversations in the continually increasing solitude of Fontainebleau. We have seen

how Ney and Macdonald had left him. Oudinot, Lefebvre, and Moncey quitted him, each after his own fashion. Berthier had also retired, but, in some sort, by an order from his master. Napoleon had confided to him the command of the army, in order that he might transfer it to the provisional government, and that during this transmission he might confirm the grades bestowed as the reward of the blood shed in the last campaign. Berthier had promised to return; Napoleon expected him; but seeing hours and days pass, but no Berthier, he began to despair of seeing him, and suffered without complaining. Instead of the arrival of Berthier, each succeeding day witnessed the departure of some officer of high rank. One left Fontainebleau on account of his health, another for family reasons or for business—all promised to return soon, but not one kept his word. Napoleon feigned to enter into the motives of each, pressed affectionately the hands of all at parting, for he knew that he was receiving their last adieus, and listened, without believing, when they promised to return quickly. Gradually the palace of Fontainebleau had become empty. In the deserted courts the noise of carriage wheels was still sometimes heard, but after a little attention the ear discovered that these were departing vehicles. Napoleon seemed amid these scenes as if assisting at his own funeral. Who has not often seen, at the commencement of winter, a powerful oak throwing wide its leafless branches, whilst at its feet lie the withered débris of its former rich vegetation? All around, through the cold air, reigns a profound silence, and sometimes the rustle of a falling leaf is heard. The tree, motionless and proud, retains only a few yellowed leaves, and they too are about to fall like the others; but it does not rear less proudly above the surrounding plain its lofty, but despoiled head. And it was so Napoleon saw fall off, one by one, those who had accompanied him through the innumerable vicissitudes of his life. There were some who held on a day, two days at most, and who fell off on the third. All ultimately reached the same point. But there were a few whom nothing had been able to shake. Druot, with disapprobation in his heart, sadness on his brow, and respect on his lips, had remained with his unfortunate master. General Bertrand had followed this generous example. The Dukes of Vicence and Bassano had also remained. The Duke de Vicence was not more of a courtier than formerly, whilst the Duke of Bassano seemed to have become a greater flatterer than ever, and thus gave an honourable excuse for his long submission, by proving that it was the result of a sincere and absolute admiration for Napoleon, alike independent of time and circumstances. Napoleon, touched by his devotedness, said more than once, "Bassano, people say that it is you who pre-

vented my making peace! What do you say to that? This accusation ought to make you smile, like all those that are lavished on me at present." And Napoleon repeatedly pressed Bassano's hand, acknowledging thus, in the most noble manner, that it was himself alone who was culpable.

This protracted agony was to come to a close. The commissioners of the different powers arrived, and Napoleon received them with perfect courtesy, excepting the Prussian commissioner, who recalled two painful remembrances—his former faults with regard to Prussia, and the odious conduct of the Prussian army in our ravaged provinces. Napoleon received the Prussian commissioner politely, but coldly. Everything being ready for the 18th, Napoleon having received a more detailed account of what had taken place at Rambouillet, saw at a glance that this interview from which he had expected some advantage, less for himself than for Marie Louise and the King of Rome, would only end in depriving him of their presence, and that these beloved objects, regarded not as members of his family, but as part of the pomp of his throne, would be taken from him with the throne itself. He was so exasperated at the idea that for a moment he was tempted to break the treaty of the 11th April and to plunge into new adventures. But soon recovering his self-command, he became resigned, and determined to set off. The orders for the Governor of Elba not being sufficiently explicit, M. de Caulaincourt again went to Paris, in order to get them more precisely detailed. At length, on the morning of the 20th, everything being ready, Napoleon determined to quit Fontainebleau. The battalion of the guard appointed to accompany him to the isle of Elba was already en route. The guard was encamped at Fontainebleau; Napoleon wished to bid them farewell. He had them drawn up around him in a circle in the castle yard, then, in presence of his old soldiers, all profoundly touched, he pronounced the following words: "Soldiers, you, my old companions-in-arms, who have always accompanied me in the road to honour, we must at length separate. I might have remained longer among you, but to do so I should have prolonged a bitter struggle, adding, perhaps, civil to foreign war, and I could not bear the idea of longer convulsing France. Enjoy the repose you have so justly earned, and be happy. As for me, do not pity me. I have a mission, and it is to fulfil that that I consent to live, and this mission is to relate to posterity the great deeds we have performed together. I would wish to clasp you all in my arms, but allow me to embrace the flag which represents you."

Then drawing towards him General Petit, who carried the standard, and who was an accomplished model of modest

heroism, he pressed the standard and the general to his bosom amid the cheers and tears of all present. He then sprang into his carriage with moistened eyes, having touched the hearts even of the commissioners sent to accompany him.

His journey at first proceeded slowly. General Druot went first in a carriage. Napoleon followed in his, accompanied by General Bertrand; the commissioners of the powers came next. During the first stages, the cavalry of the guard accompanied the cortège. Further on, the detachments having retired, the cortège proceeded without escort. In the early part of the journey, and even in the midst of the Bourbonnais, Napoleon was received with acclamations by the people, who, though detesting the conscription and the *droits réunis*, saw in him the unhappy hero and the valiant defender of his native land. Whilst the crowd surrounded his carriage crying *Vive l'Empereur*, they pressed round that of the commissioners, exclaiming *à bas les etrangers*. Napleon several times apologised to the foreign commissioners for manifestations of feeling that it was not in his power to prevent, but which proved, however, that he was not so unpopular throughout France as certain persons had asserted. In general, he conversed freely and gently with the functionaries he met on the route, received their adieus, and offered his with perfect calmness.

The journey soon became painful. In the environs of Moulins the cries of *Vive l'Empereur* ceased. *Vive le roi! Vivent les Bourbons!* were heard. Between Moulins and Lyon the people only exhibited curiosity, without adding any more significant demonstration. Napoleon had always had many partisans at Lyon, on account of what he had done for their city and manufacturers; still there was a portion of the population who professed entirely opposite sentiments. In order to avoid all open manifestations, the cortège passed through Lyon by night. Some cries of *Vive l'Empereur* were heard, and these were the last that saluted Napoleon's ears. Passing through Valence, Napoleon met Marshal Augereau, who had just published an infamous proclamation, drawn up, it is said, by the Duke of Otranto, and concluding with these words: "Soldiers, you are released from your oaths; you are released by the nation, in whom the sovereign power resides; you are released, if more were needed, by the abdication of a man who, after having immolated millions of victims to his insatiable ambition, *has not known how to die like a soldier*." Poor Augereau was still further from knowing how to die like a soldier; he had not exposed himself to death on the Saône and Rhône, where he had contributed by his weakness and incapacity to ruin the affairs of France. Napoleon, who knew nothing of Augereau's proclamation, but who was well

acquainted with his unfortunate campaign, did not make him any reproach; he received him with indulgent familiarity, and even embraced him at parting. Advancing towards the south, the cries of *Vive le roi!* became more frequent, and to these were added—*à bas le tyran! à mort le tyran!* At Orange especially the cries were reiterated with violence. At Avignon, the excited population wildly demanded that "the Corsican" should be delivered to them, that they might tear him in pieces and throw him into the Rhône. Whilst the populace treated thus the man of genius, guilty indeed, but covered with glory, who had so long represented in his own person the prosperity and the greatness of France, they shouted *Vivent les Allies!* around the carriage of the commissioners. Still the popular favour shown to foreigners was at the moment fortunate, as but for this popularity Napoleon, with his throat cut, might have anticipated in the waters of the Rhône the unfortunate Marshal Brune. All the efforts of the commissioners, magistrates, and the police were needed to prevent the commission of a horrible crime. Information was received that a vast multitude was assembled at Orgon, and that violence might be expected. These excited populations, exasperated by the conscription, the *droits réunis*, and by the long suspension of trade, were royalists in 1814, as they had been terrorists in 1793, and only wanted an opportunity to exhibit the same sanguinary spirit again. The commissioners, upon whom lay so heavy a responsibility, saw no other means of escaping the danger than by inducing Napoleon to assume a disguise. He accordingly put on a foreign uniform, and passed for one of the officers composing the cortège. This humiliation, the most painful he had undergone, had been, we may remember, present to his mind when he swallowed the poison prepared by Dr. Yvan; but however painful it might be to assume the disguise, it was indispensably necessary. When the cortège reached the little town of Orgon, the people, armed with a gibbet, appeared calling for the tyrant, and threw themselves on the imperial carriage, intending to open it by force. General Bertrand alone was inside, and his life might have been sacrificed to the fury excited against his master, but that M. de Schouvaloff, springing from his carriage and addressing the multitude in French, which, like all Russians, he spoke remarkably well, endeavoured to awaken in the minds of the exasperated crowd the sentiments that a conquered man and a prisoner ought to inspire. As to the rest, his Russian uniform was of more service to M. de Schouvaloff than his eloquent speech, and he succeeded in calming the most excited of the mob. At the succeeding stages the demonstration of violence gradually diminished, and they entirely ceased as the cortège approached the sea.

During these severe trials Napoleon remained motionless and silent, affecting a sovereign contempt for what was going on; but he could not be insensible to the reiterated cries of public hate, and he once actually melted into tears. He recovered himself quickly, and endeavoured to reassume a haughty impassibility; but he could not help discerning, amid the baseness of these demonstrations, that slow but infallible justice which would be disgusting to contemplate if we only considered it in the vile instruments it employs, but which, if we raise our eyes to the source, appears as profound as terribly avenging. There remains to the great minds who have provoked this avenging power only one honour, one consolation—that is, to acknowledge, to comprehend, and resign themselves to its decrees. After having shed, not through wickedness of heart, but through excess of ambition, more blood than any Asiatic conqueror had ever poured forth, Napoleon felt, without saying it, that he deserved the violent execrations of the multitude. Alas! this many-headed multitude has often trailed in bloody mire sages and virtuous heroes, who had only merited applause; and it must be confessed that if the popular outcry was never more insulting than on the present occasion, it had often been more unjust.

This punishment was terrible, but happily short. Napoleon found at the Gulf of St. Raphaël an English frigate, the *Undaunted*, which Colonel Campbell, the English commissioner, had ordered to be prepared. He embarked on the 28th April for the isle of Elba, and cast anchor on the 3rd May in the road of Porto Ferrajo. On the morrow, the 4th, he disembarked amid the joyous shouts of a population proud of having for their sovereign this monarch, who had fallen from the highest throne of the universe, bringing with him, as they said, immense treasures, and about to inundate the isle with benefits. Thus to indemnify him for the homage of the universe he received the acclamations of some thousand islanders, who were either fishermen or miners. Empty and cruel comedy of human life! Napoleon, lord of the great empire that had extended from Rome to Lübeck, Napoleon was now the enthusiastically received monarch of the isle of Elba.

CONCLUSION.

In beholding this wondrous reign finish so disastrously, reflections crowd upon the mind, suggested by the greatness, the variety, and strange character of the events! Let us pause on these reflections before closing our recital: they may tend to our instruction, and to that of future generations.

The republican government in 1795 had ceased to be sanguinary, without, however, renouncing the spirit of persecution, and had imposed peace on Spain, Prussia, and Northern Germany, and remained engaged in war with Austria and England, a war kept up, so to speak, through habit, by means of admirable soldiers, and excellent but disunited generals, when there suddenly appeared in the army of the Alps a young artillery officer, of small stature, shy, but haughty expression of face, striking, but eccentric turn of mind, alternately taciturn or lavishly loquacious, one moment disgraced under the Republic, and then banished into the bureaux of the Directory, where he attracted attention by his just and profound opinions on every phase of the war, which procured him the command of Paris on the 13th Vendémiaire, and soon after the command of the troops in Italy. Reappearing suddenly amongst the army as commander-in-chief, he immediately impressed an extraordinary momentum on events, crossed the Alps, whose feet only had been touched by any previous general, invaded Lombardy, turned the tide of war in that direction, conquered in succession the different armies of Austria, tired out her patience, forced her to acknowledge our conquests, and obliged her to subscribe to the immense losses she had sustained. He thus gave peace to the continent, and his astonishing deeds he expressed in language entirely new by its originality and grandeur, a language that may be called military eloquence. That this extraordinary young man should appear like a meteor on this disturbed and bloody horizon without attracting every eye and chaining every heart would have been impossible. Even had France been ice-cold, which she never was, she would have been captivated. She was bewitched, and the entire world with her.

Of all the powers to whom the Revolution had thrown down the gauntlet, one only remained to be conquered. This was England. Sitting aloof, upon her own element, inaccessible to us as we to her, it might have been believed that she never could become either victor or vanquished. The Directory, looking for occupation for the conqueror of Italy, and believing him to be not only the greatest captain of the century, but the most fruitful in resources, commissioned him to surmount the physical difficulties that separate us from our eternal rival. Young Bonaparte being appointed general of the ocean army, did not find the preparations made to cross the Straits of Dover sufficient for the purpose, and led on by his powerful imagination, he determined to attack England in the east. It was he that suggested the expedition to Egypt, crossed the Mediterranean, before Nelson's eyes, with five hundred sail, took Malta *en passant*, disembarked at the foot of Pompey's Pillar, conquered the Mamelukes at the Pyramids, the Janissaries at

Aboukir, and having become master of Egypt, abandoned himself during some months to wonder-picturing dreams, which embraced at the same time both the east and the west. Learning suddenly that, thanks to its anarchical nature, the Directory had been engaged in a fresh war, which through incapacity was badly managed, General Bonaparte abandoned Egypt, crossed the sea a second time, and by his sudden appearance surprised and delighted France, that was plunged in desolation. He had not been more prompt to covet the supreme power than France was to offer it; for seeing his mode of directing war, administering conquered provinces, in a word, his manner of managing everything, France had recognised in him a great political as well as a great military chief. Having become First Consul, he signed within two years a continental peace at Lunéville, a naval peace at Amiens, tranquillised La Vendée, reconciled the Church to the French Revolution, re-established religion, gave peace to France and to Europe, and allowed the wearied world to breathe after twelve years of blood-spilling strife. In recompense for so many prodigies, he was invested in 1802 with supreme power for life, and he continued to win universal admiration by his efforts to reconstitute France and Europe.

Who could prevent such a man remaining in quiet, and peacefully enjoying the happiness he had procured others and himself? Some penetrating minds, seeing his devouring activity, experienced a kind of involuntary terror; but the generation of that time gave themselves up to him with blind confidence; and indeed it would be difficult in listening to this young man to doubt his profound wisdom. There was not a single event of the terrible French Revolution that had not deeply penetrated his mind, and added largely to his knowledge of human nature. He spoke of regicide and the effusion of human blood with horror. He considered party spirit a wild and detestable manifestation, and wished to put an end to it by tranquillising Vendée, and recalling the emigrants. He condemned the assumption of the French Revolution, that wished to have exclusive control in religious matters, without setting any value on the pontifical authority; it was alike tyrannical for individual consciences, and dangerous for the State. Napoleon, after having arranged with the Pope, again opened the churches, and attended mass, in presence of the angry revolutionists. He had a horror of disordered finances, paper money, bankruptcy, and treated with contempt these flatterers of the populace who had abolished indirect taxation. Besides, in eloquent diatribes against Mr. Pitt, inserted in the *Moniteur*, he decried war, which was his profession, his glory, his power, and said he would be very glad if Mr. Pitt and

his adherents were sent to bivouac on bloodstained battlefields, or to cruise day and night amid ocean tempests, and learn what war really was. Lastly, what bitter raillery did he not pour forth against the inventors of a universal republic who wished to submit all Europe to a single power, and moreover wished to model his government on an imaginary type drawn from their own brain! Who could teach anything to this young man, so well instructed by the events of the French Revolution? Alas! he was so wise, so thoughtful, when called upon to judge the passions of others; but when it became necessary to resist his own, what was he?

Now, the young consul possessed everything his heart could desire, and satisfied every hope the world had formed of him. His power was limitless, in virtue not only of the laws, but of the adhesion of the nation. He was invested with supreme power for life, which ought to be sufficient for a man who was a husband, but not a father; he had also the privilege of choosing his successor, a privilege that allowed him to consult at the same time the interest of the public and gratify his personal affections. As to France, she had, thanks to the Revolution and to him, a position which she had never held before, and which she was never again to hold, even when she commanded from Cadiz to Lübeck. Her frontiers were the Alps, the Rhine, the Scheldt; in fact, all that she could wish for the maintenance of her safety and her power, for acquisitions beyond these limits were contrary to the indications of nature and the principles of sound policy. France had emancipated Italy to the Adige, taking care to indemnify in Germany the Austrian princes who formerly had appanages in Italy. Acknowledging the necessity of the papal authority in matters of faith and its high utility in politics, France had restored the Pope, who was indebted to her for the safety and respect he enjoyed, and from her he expected the restoration of all his States. France wisely despised the powerless anger of the Neapolitan Bourbons. She had arranged the affairs of Switzerland with admirable wisdom. Recognising both the great and little cantons, the aristocratic and democratic cantons, because all existed, obliging them to live in peace and on terms of equality, abolishing the subjection of classes and territorial subjection, in a word, putting in execution in the Alps the principles of 1789 without outraging nature, whose laws are always invincible, she gave, in the act of mediation, the model of all the future constitutions of Switzerland. But it was in Germany especially that the profound wisdom of the consular policy was most eminently displayed. There were German princes stripped of their States by the cession of the left bank of the Rhine to France; there were Austrian princes stripped of their patrimony by the emancipa-

tion of Italy. The First Consul never thought of leaving either without compensation, or allowing Germany to remain unorganised. The French Revolution had already established in France the principle of secularisation by the alienation of ecclesiastical property, and extending the principle to Germany, getting it recognised there, furnished ample means of indemnifying the deposed princes. With what remained of the States of the Archbishops of Treves, of Mayence, of Cologne, and with those of some other ecclesiastical princes, the First Consul collected wherewith to indemnify all the royal families that had suffered loss, and maintain in Germany a sage equilibrium. After having judiciously combined the indemnities and influences in the confederation, after having secured suitable pensions to the deposed ecclesiastical princes, he maturely arranged his plan, and not having at that time adopted the principle of writing treaties with his sword alone, he associated in his work Prussia, who was induced to assist through motives of interest, Russia, through self-love, and Austria, influenced by the example of the two other powers. By these means he succeeded in procuring the adoption of the *recez* of 1803, a masterpiece of practical and profound policy. This *recez*, in fact, without involving us too deeply in German affairs, re-established in Germany order, peace, and content, and placed in our hands the balance of the Germanic interests. It also prepared for us the only alliance at that time desirable and possible, that of Prussia. France was at that moment so powerful, so dreaded, that with the alliance of one continental State she was certain of the submission of the others; and the continent, once submissive, England would be obliged to devour in silence her vexation at seeing her rival so great. Such an alliance France could at that time only form with Prussia. Austria having lost the Low Countries, Swabia, almost the entire of Italy, and the ecclesiastical principalities which constituted her *clientèle* in Germany, was in Europe the great victim of the French Revolution, and this was an inevitable calamity. A sound policy pointed out that it would be better to humour her, even indemnify her for her losses, if possible, but at the same time showed that it would be impossible to convert her either into a friend or an ally. Russia's alliance was to be purchased only at the expense of fearful concessions in the east. With her it was necessary to keep up courtesy without intimacy, and avoid as much as possible all actual business. Prussia alone remained with whom it was easy to come to an understanding. This power, gorged with Church property, was ardently desirous of more, and was become what in France was called *un acquereur de biens nationaux*. By treating Austria with respect, by showing her favour, and never pushing her to

extremities, France was sure of her support. Her prudent and honest monarch was delighted with the policy of the First Consul, and sought his friendship. A union with Prussia consequently assured us the submission of the entire continent and the resignation of haughty England. The First Consul had forced the latter, in subscribing to the peace of Amiens, to acknowledge our conquests, and that, which she most disliked, the conquest of Antwerp. With regard to England, only one difficulty remained to be overcome—it was by humouring to induce her to pardon us all the glory we had acquired in a few years; and this was possible, for the English admired the First Consul with all the vivacity of British enthusiasm, which at least equals that of the Parisians. A word of flattery from his lips, emanating from the height of his genius, which was elevated as the most exalted throne in the world, would be sure to touch to the quick the heart of haughty Albion. It was possible that this flattery might not always be repaid with flattery; on the pinnacle of glory to which he had attained, some English orators or some emigrant journalists might insult him, but he could well afford to despise their insolence, and leave to the world, to the English nation itself, the task of avenging him.

There remained still another power, formerly of considerable importance, but at the period of which we speak lamentably fallen, we mean Spain, still under the sceptre of the Bourbons, but fallen into such a state of disintegration, and in this state so prostrate at the feet of the First Consul, that one word sent from Paris to poor Charles IV., or the wretched Godoy, was sufficient to govern her. And allowing this work of disintegration to advance, it was evident that Spain would soon be obliged to ask from the First Consul not only a system of policy, which she had already done, but a government, perhaps a king.

What, then, had he to wish more for himself or for France, he, the happy mortal, who had become her head? Nothing but to persevere in this policy, which was that of force rendered supportable by moderation. No man ever enjoyed so many diverse species of glory as the conqueror of Rivoli, of the Pyramids, of Marengo—the author of the Concordat, of the treaties of Lunéville and Amiens, of the act of Swiss mediation, of the *recez* of the Diet of 1803, of the Civil Code, and of the recall of the emigrants. If one merit were wanted to complete the *fasces* of his merits, it was perhaps that he had not given liberty to France. But at that period the apprehension of political liberty, far from being a pretext for degrading servility, was an insurmountable principle. To the generation of 1800 liberty was only another name for the scaffold, for schism, for the Vendean war, for bankruptcy, for confiscation. The only

species of liberty at that time suited to France was the moderation of a great man. But alas! the moderation of a great man, endowed with unlimited power, even were he at the same time endowed with every gift of genius, is it not of all revolutionary chimeras the most chimerical?

But misplaced liberty produces as great evils as her total absence. This man, at that time so admirable, was by the very fact of possessing absolute power on the brink of an abyss. In fact, within a few months after the peace of Amiens had been signed, and when the first emotions of joy had subsided amongst the English, there arose before their eyes, like a mighty but importunately dazzling light, the greatness of France, unfortunately but little shaded in the person of the First Consul. Some flattering attentions offered to Mr. Fox when he visited Paris did not in the least detract from the attitude taken by the First Consul as master, not only of the affairs of France, but of Europe. His language, sparkling with genius and redolent of ambition, offended the pride of the English; his devouring activity disturbed their peace. He sent an army to St. Domingo, which was certainly very allowable; but he publicly sent Colonel Sebastiani into Turkey, Colonel Savary into Egypt, and General Decaen into India, charged with missions of observation, which it would be very difficult to construe into scientific missions. These movements were more than sufficient to excite British suspicions. At this period many emigrants, who persevered in remaining in England notwithstanding the glory and clemency of the First Consul, put forth against him and his family many publications which a year before would have been universally condemned in England, but for which an imprudent jealousy now procured a favourable reception, which the spirit of the laws did not interdict. These were certainly effusions that only deserved contempt; for what pinnacle could be higher than that on which the First Consul was placed, and from which he could look down on the insults of calumny? Alas! he descended from this glorious eminence to listen to pamphleteers, and abandoned himself to bursts of passion as violent as unworthy of him. To insult him, the philosopher, the conqueror, what an unpardonable crime! As if in all times, and in every country, free or otherwise, genius, virtue, and beneficence have not been insulted! No torrents of blood should flow because pamphleteers, who every day insulted their own government, had insulted a stranger, certainly a great man, but after all only a man, and moreover the head of a rival nation!

From that moment the gauntlet was thrown down between the warrior who represented, in his own person, the French Revolution, and the English people, whose jealousy had not been

sufficiently soothed. Only a few days and Malta would have been evacuated, but by a singular fatality it happened that at this moment, when all the British passions were excited, the First Consul, exercising in Switzerland his dictatorial beneficence, sent an army to Berne. A weak-minded minister, pandering to British passions, found in this act a pretext for suspending the evacuation of Malta. If the First Consul had had patience, if he had insisted firmly but gently, the frivolity of the motive would not have long opposed a hindrance to the solemnly promised evacuation of the great Mediterranean fortress. But the First Consul, influenced not alone by a feeling of wounded pride, but of resentment for outraged justice, demanded the execution of treaties; "For," he said, "no power shall with impunity fail in a promise made to France or to me." Everybody remembers the sadly heroic scene with Lord Whitworth and the rupture of the peace of Amiens. The First Consul vowed from that moment to perish or to punish England. Fatal vow! The emigrants, we mean those that were irreconcilable, did not limit themselves to writing, they conspired. The First Consul discovering with his penetrating glance plots that the police were unable to detect, pounced upon the conspirators, and believing that he discovered princes amongst them, and not being able to seize those whom he considered the real criminals, he went into the heart of Germany, caring little for the rights of nations, to arrest the descendant of the Condés. He ordered him to be shot without pity, and he, the severe reprover of the 20th January, equalled, as far as he could, the crime of regicide, and seemed to experience a kind of satisfaction in committing the crime in the face of Europe, in contempt and defiance of public opinion. The prudent consul had become suddenly a madman, labouring under two species of mania—the anger of the offended man, who only breathes vengeance, and the anger of the conqueror, voluntarily braving enemies that he is certain to conquer. Afterwards, in order to brave his enemies more effectually, and satisfy his ambition at the same time as his anger, he placed the imperial crown on his head. Europe, at once offended and alarmed, saw France and her ruler in a new light. At the sound of the fusilade of Vincennes, Prussia, who had formed a solemn alliance with France, drew back, became silent, and renounced an intimacy that had ceased to be honourable. Austria, more calculating, made no display of feeling, but profited of the opportunity to keep no measure in the execution of the *recez* of 1803. The young Emperor of Russia, Alexander, honest, and full of honour, alone dared, as guarantee of the Germanic constitution, to demand an explanation of the violation of the Baden territory. Napoleon replied by an insulting allusion to the death of Pius I. The czar held his peace,

wounded to the heart, and determined to avenge the insult. Thus Prussia, chilled in friendship; Austria, encouraged in her excesses; Russia, insulted—all became auxiliary, from different motives, to the commencement of our struggle with England.

The Boulogne expedition was prepared. Napoleon might have slowly organised his navy, and directed remote expeditions against the English colonies, leaving the continent, which was ill-disposed, but intimidated, in peace; he might then have waited until his expeditions should have caused some sensible injury to England; until our corsairs should have harassed her commerce, and she should be wearied of a war in which we could do little against her, but in which she could do nothing against us, our traffic being at that time exclusively continental.

But this powerful genius, the greatest conqueror of physical difficulties that perhaps ever existed, wished to fight England hand to hand, and in this he was right; for could any one pass the Straits of Dover with a powerful army, he was most certainly the man. To the genius of profound political combinations he joined the fulminating genius of war; to these he added, in an especial manner, the prestige that fascinates soldiers and disconcerts the enemy; and he could, having accomplished the miracle of crossing the strait, effect a second miracle, that of terminating the war at a single blow. His preparations, though never put into execution, will be for military men and legislators enduring monuments of his capabilities of resource. But see the value of innate disposition! This man, who had the greatest of all difficulties to conquer, that of crossing the sea with an army of a hundred and fifty thousand men, and who consequently needed that the continent should be perfectly tranquil—this daring man, having gone to Milan to assume the Italian crown, declared, on his own authority, that Genoa should be reunited to the empire. The European coalition was again immediately formed. Russia, deeply hurt by the insults she had received from the First Consul, and also offended by the naval pretensions of England, thought to act as mediatrix, and could not help demanding the evacuation of Malta. But when the annexation of Genoa was made known she discontinued her demands, and joining with England and Austria, she gave her armies the order to march, hoping to be joined on her route by the Prussians, who had been restrained until now by the prudence and moderation of their king. Thus he who had been the sage peacemaker in 1803 was now become the inciter of a general war, merely because he had not been able to subdue his passions.

But he, like Alexander or Cæsar, was a man of genius, and genius is forgiven much and long by Fortune. The threats of the continent did not interrupt the preparations for his great

expedition; it failed in consequence of the admiral's fault, and fortunately—for had he embarked at the same time that the Austrian army was passing the Inn, it is very possible that whilst he was opening for himself a road to London, the Austrians would have advanced towards Paris. However that may have been, when his expedition was necessarily deferred, he advanced like a lion that springs from one enemy to another, and in a few days, hastening from Boulogne to Ulm, from Ulm to Austerlitz, he overwhelmed Austria and Russia, and then saw Prussia, that was about joining the rest of Europe, fall at his feet, and implore mercy from the conqueror of the coalition.

Henceforth the war with England was changed into a continental war, which indeed would not have been a disadvantage had the political affairs been as well directed as the military. In taking up arms for England, the continental powers provided us the battlefield we needed—a battlefield that gave us Austerlitz and Ulm instead of Trafalgar. There was consequently no reason to complain. But when they had been well beaten and convinced of the folly of their efforts, they should have been treated in a manner that would have deprived them of all desire to recommence the strife. Austria ought to have been punished, but not driven to despair—nay, she ought even to have been consoled, as a means of compensating her for her great losses, could an indemnification be found. Russia ought to have been left in her confusion, and the powerlessness resulting from distance, without making or asking concessions; and lastly, Prussia ought neither to be punished for her faults nor ridiculed for her unsuccessful mediation—it would have been better to make her feel the danger of yielding to the passions of coteries, and she ought to have been definitely attached by giving her some of the *optimæ spoliæ* of victory. Then our victorious arms could be turned against England, deprived of her allies, terrified at her isolation, assailed by our corsairs, and threatened by a formidable invasion, reason declares, and facts prove, that she would not have waited until her conquered allies had signed their treaties to propose to treat herself. It would have been an extension of the peace of Amiens.

After Ulm and Austerlitz, Napoleon was in a position to realise in Europe the wise and profound policy of separating the continent from England, and thus forcing the latter to make peace. Austria, accustomed to warfare during five years, three at least of which were against us, seeing foreign armies advance in two months as far as Vienna and Brunn, losing whole armies in one day, reduced to laying down her arms like Mack, was no longer inclined to resist us, provided she was not driven to the last degree of despair. The young Emperor of Russia, who at the head of Souvarof's soldiers had hoped to act a very

important part, and had been reduced to play a very humiliating one, had fallen into extreme dejection. Prussia, that with two hundred thousand soldiers of the great Frederick had gone to dictate the law at Vienna, finding us in a position to give laws to the entire world, presented an alarmed and almost ridiculous appearance. How easy, how becoming, how wise it would have been to be generous to such enemies.

We have already said why it would have been impossible to make a friend of Austria; but though she could not be made an ally of France at that time, it was not wise to add unnecessarily to her causes of vexation, and change them into implacable hatred. As a compensation for the loss of the Low Countries, of Swabia, the Milanese, and the *clientèle* of the Ecclesiastical States, she might have been given the Venetian States. It was harsh to deprive her of them. However, they were taken from Austria, because warfare cannot be an inexpensive game to those with whom it originates; and indeed the freedom of Italy could not with decency be alleged as a motive, when we ourselves had taken Piedmont, and converted Lombardy into an appanage for the Bonaparte family. But to deprive Austria of every seaport, as Napoleon did then, in taking from her Venice, Trieste, and Illyria, and shut her up in her continental possessions, was treating her with a rigour that was without real advantage for us, and only calculated to drive her to despair. But not stopping there, but depriving her besides of the Tyrol, Vorarlberg, and the remains of Swabia, in order to enrich Bavaria, Wurtemberg, and Baden, unimportant and unfaithful allies, who only aided that they might betray us, this was only rendering her implacable. To treat people in this way is like attempting their death; and if we do not kill them, we prepare for ourselves enemies, who at the first opportunity will stab us in the back, and their conduct cannot excite wonder.

Depriving Austria of the Venetian States was, we repeat, harsh, and yet it was the almost inevitable result of the third coalition. It would have been good policy to compensate her for this inevitable rigour. It would have been easy, according to the fashion in which the world was treated then, to send her towards the east, and give her the Danubian provinces. Had this been done, the fate of Europe would have been changed; and Austria, placed upon the Danube, her true position, would have gained more than she had lost, would have always protected Constantinople, and would have been for ever at enmity with Russia. This would have been, without doubt, a very dictatorial proceeding; but as these provinces were afterwards given to Russia, it would most assuredly have been better to have gratified Austria at this moment. Russia might have

taken it ill, but that would have been her punishment for interfering in this war. As to the Turks, incapable of comprehending the service that had been done them, they would not have interfered, and Austria would certainly have accepted the Danubian provinces, for her only thought was to obtain compensation, no matter how, which indeed she carried so far as to demand Hanover for the dispossessed archdukes—Hanover, the patrimony of her ally, England.

Far from thinking of compensation, Napoleon only thought of stripping her, of turning her into ridicule, and making her a victim even longer than was necessary. He took away, then, without compensation, and independently of the Venetian States, Illyria, the Tyrol, Vorarlberg, and the remains of Swabia. In general, punishment is inflicted to destroy the will to offend, but here, far from removing the desire, it was excited to passion in the breast of Austria. Towards Prussia, Napoleon entertained but one sentiment—to make her the subject of jest. In truth, she supplied the materials! The czar, through the influence of a thoughtless nobility and a beautiful and imprudent queen, had induced the King of Prussia to declare war, and his ambassador, M. d'Haugwitz, coming to Vienna on the eve of the battle of Austerlitz to dictate the law, and receiving it on his knees on the morrow, was indeed one of those comic spectacles that the world sometimes presents. But if it is ever permitted to laugh at the ridiculous in human events, it is when we are spectators, not directors of the scene. Napoleon had all the caprices of power: he would do as he pleased, and amuse himself besides; that was too much, a hundred times too much!

Austria asking Hanover for her archdukes inspired Napoleon with an idea which he thought most piquant, that of presenting the spoils of England to her allies. But instead of giving Hanover to Austria, he gave it to Prussia. This may have been more conformable to geographical unity, but it was contrary to sound policy. Far from laughing at Prussia, he ought, on the contrary, to have pitied her false position. She had always desired to obtain possession of Hanover, but being induced through the error of her court to join in the excitement of Europe against France, it was placing her in a cruel position to force her to accept Hanover at this moment, and only excited in her already anxious mind a conflict between avidity and honour. Without doubt, it is something, it is even a great deal, to satisfy men's interests; but it is nothing if, at the same time, we humiliate them; for happily there is as much pride as avidity in the human heart. To humble Prussia in enriching her was not making her an ally—it was making her ungrateful, and her ingratitude would be proportionate to her honesty.

Napoleon offered Hanover to Prussia with the sword at her throat. "Hanover or war," he seemed to say to M. d'Haugwitz —who indeed did not hesitate, and chose Hanover. Napoleon did not stop there, but made her pay for this unwelcome gift by sacrificing the Marquisate of Anspach and the Duchy of Berg, so that he lessened the value of his gift without lessening the shame of its acceptance. This was a serious mistake, for it was making war with England interminable. In fact, it was impossible that old George III. would ever consent to give up the patrimony of his family, and the English kings had at that time an influence in the monarchical republic of England that they no longer possess. M. d'Haugwitz, who had left Potsdam for Schönbrunn, amidst the applauses of the court, in order to give the law to France, and declare war for the advantage of England, now returned to Berlin, after receiving the law from France, and laden with the richest of British spoils. What must have been the excitement of an honest king, of a proud nation, and of a vain and impassioned court.

Thus Napoleon, instead of deriving from his incomparable victory at Austerlitz a continental and maritime peace, a double peace which he might easily have secured by discouraging and alienating the allies of England, had oppressed some, humbled others, and left a desperate war as the only resource to all. He had even created an invincible obstacle to peace by giving Hanover to Prussia.

All the arrangements at Vienna in 1806 were mistakes, and Napoleon did not even confine himself to these serious errors. When he returned to Paris, he abandoned himself to an intoxication of ambition unparalleled in modern times. He planned then an immense empire, supported by vassal kingdoms, which should rule Europe, and which should be designated by a name consecrated by the Romans and Charlemagne, "THE EMPIRE OF THE WEST." Napoleon had already prepared two vassal kingdoms in the Cisalpine Republic, converted into a kingdom of Italy, and in the kingdom of Naples, which had been taken from the Bourbons and given to his brother Joseph. To these he added Holland, which had been changed from a republic to a monarchy and given to his brother Louis. But this was not all. The Empire of the West to be complete should embrace Germany. Napoleon had made allies there— the Princes of Bavaria, of Wurtemberg, and of Baden. He had abandoned to them the spoils of Austria, of Prussia, and of the unsecularised ecclesiastical princes, gave them up the *noblesse immédiate*, made them kings, and asked in marriage for his brothers, adopted children, and lieutenants, princesses of these houses, and his alliance was eagerly accepted. Germany

had not yet recovered from the confusion caused by the system of secularisation, and was still in an extraordinary state of disorder in consequence of the many questions that yet remained to be decided. The sovereign princes who remained electors or had become kings pillaged the property of the nobility and of the Church, and did not pay the pensions of the deposed ecclesiastical princes, and all the oppressed in their despair invoked, not conquered Austria or ridiculed Prussia, but he who was the master of fate—Napoleon. This universal appeal to him excited the idea of a new Germanic Confederation, which should be called "The Confederation of the Rhine," and should be placed under the protection of Napoleon. It was composed of Bavaria, Wurtemberg, Baden, Nassau, and all the princes of the south of Germany. Thus the Emperor of the West, Mediator of Switzerland, Protector of the Confederation of the Rhine, Suzerain of the kingdoms of Naples, Italy, and Holland, needed only to join Spain to his vassal States to be more powerful than Charlemagne. Such were the projects that the fumes of pride had excited in the vast brain of Napoleon.

In such a state of disintegration, Francis II. not being able to retain the title of Emperor of Germany, resigned it, and was thenceforth called Emperor of Austria. This was the most humiliating degradation after his territorial losses. Prussia being also expelled from the old Germanic Confederation drew around her the princes of the north of Germany, and thus became the head of a little third-rate Germany. She asked permission to form this confederacy, which was coldly granted, with the secret determination to discourage those who may be tempted to join her. This was injury upon injury, both for Austria, that should have been punished without being driven to despair, and for Prussia, that should have been won by helping her interests and protecting her honour. In fact, it was the most delusive of all policies to interfere to such a degree in German affairs. In the middle ages, Germany, not being able to arrive at unity, had stood still at the federative state. These States, whilst they preserved their independence, had entered into a confederation to defend themselves against their powerful neighbours, and of course against France, the most powerful of all. This was met by France by a policy as natural as it was lawful. Profiting of the jealousy of the Germans, she supported the petty princes against the great, and Prussia against Austria. But abandoning traditional and legitimate policy, and creating a Germanic Confederation, which would not be German, but French, which would burden us with the affairs of the Germans, and expose us to all their hatred, which would give us allies to-day, who would be traitors to-morrow, was the madness of ambition, and nothing else. In every

country in which a traditional policy exists, this policy has an appointed aim, towards which it always proceeds with greater or less speed according to the circumstances of the times. To proceed a step on this path is only to advance in the natural order of things. To advance more than one step is imprudent, but endeavouring to reach the goal at once, we are sure to miss, by overpassing it. By the *recez* of 1803, Napoleon had approached as near as possible to the object of our traditional policy in Germany. By the Confederation of the Rhine he unfortunately overstepped it. His interference was to international law what that of the Jacobins had been to social rights. They wished to remodel society; he wanted to remodel Europe. The guillotine had been their instrument; cannon was his. His remedy was infinitely less odious, and was, besides, surrounded by the prestige of glory. It was not a whit wiser.

Such were the fruits of the great victory of Austerlitz. Spite of these errors, the fact of the victory still remained dazzling, overwhelming. Russia utterly broken down, England terrified by her isolation, wished for peace, and nothing would be easier than to conclude one with these two powers. In letting these opportunities pass, Napoleon put the acme to his errors.

Touching the mouths of the Cattaro, which the Austrians had perfidiously given up to the Russians instead of giving them to us, the czar sent M. d'Oubril to Paris. As Austria and Prussia had negotiated directly with France, the czar refused to interfere in their concerns. Russia had constituted herself the patron of two royal families—Savoy and the Neapolitan Bourbons. She was desirous of obtaining Sardinia for the one, and Sicily for the other. On these conditions she was ready to sanction all Napoleon had done. England had passed from the hands of Pitt to those of Fox. It was a most favourable moment to conclude the maritime peace. Fox had sent Lords Yarmouth and Lauderdale to Paris. England wished to keep Malta and the Cape; and on condition of obtaining this concession, she would allow us to overturn Europe as we had done, but she, too, wished that Sicily should be given to the Neapolitan Bourbons, and Sardinia to the house of Savoy. Thus the continent of Europe would belong to the Bonaparte family, to which it had already furnished appanages, and the two large Italian islands would be given as indemnity to the two ancient deposed families. On such terms, the great Empire of the West, such as it had been constituted, would have been accepted both by Russia and England. A treaty may be well commenced on such a basis, but pride and a want of foresight (a rare fault in Napoleon) prevented so important a result.

Napoleon wished to treat separately with England and Russia,

that he might the more effectively dictate to them. They yielded to his wish, in a certain degree, through their desire for peace. M. d'Oubril negotiated on the one side, Lords Yarmouth and Lauderdale on the other, but with a secret understanding. By terrifying M. d'Oubril, Napoleon induced him to sign a separate treaty, by which, instead of Sicily, the Bourbons of Naples should have the Balearic Isles, for which Spain would receive a compensation. England was alarmed at this, and now or never was the time to conclude a peace with her, when she was terrified at her isolation. Napoleon thought it more clever to await the ratification of the Russian treaty, flattering himself that he could then do as he pleased with England. Meantime Mr. Fox died. England succeeded in preventing the ratification of the Russian treaty, and thus the opportunity of peace was lost. An over-refined policy is legitimate, but on condition that it succeeds. When it fails, it only gains for those who were deceived the reputation of foxes taken in a snare.

However, peace was not yet absolutely impossible. At this moment the fermentation which Napoleon had caused in Prussia had attained its height. Divided between Hanover and honour, Prussia was terribly agitated, and violently excited against him who had reduced her to this alternative. In addition, two pieces of intelligence following quick on each other drove her to despair. On the one side she thought she could perceive that France secretly discouraged the princes of the north of Germany from entering into a confederacy with her, which, indeed, was true to a certain degree, but which the Elector of Hesse exaggerated even to calumny; on the other hand, she learned that Napoleon was willing to restore Hanover to the royal family of England in order to obtain a naval peace. He had not said so, but had allowed it to be understood, and indeed it was his intention to make a new arrangement with Prussia; to restore her Anspach and Berg, and take back Hanover, declaring that it was on such terms alone that the peace of the world could be secured. But he did wrong in deferring this frank avowal. Prussia considered that she was trifled with, turned into ridicule, and rated as a third-rate power, and in consequence her agitation turned into rage. Napoleon let her speak and act as she would, thinking it beneath his dignity to give an explanation which, perhaps, might have been quite satisfactory; but as she drew her sword, he drew his. He was weary of hearing constantly of the soldiers of the great Frederick, whom he had not yet conquered —and the Prussian war was the consequence. England and Russia naturally took part in the war, and that universal peace which Napoleon might have obtained by land and sea, together with the recognition of his imperial title and his immense empire, was now deferred until some new miracle should arise.

Napoleon's genius and the valour of his army had now reached the culminating point. In another month there was no longer either a Prussian monarchy or a Prussian army, and at the sight of the North Sea the soldiers exclaimed * spontaneously, "Long live the Emperor of the West." Their enthusiasm had divined his ambition. This caused him the greatest joy; but, however, he did not betray the secret desire he felt for so glorious a title. The Russians had advanced to the assistance of the Prussians. Napoleon hastened to meet them, drove them beyond the Vistula, and meeting Poland on his way, conceived the idea of restoring her former greatness, without considering whether it might not be as difficult to resuscitate a state as an individual. He was excited against the Russians, and only thought how he could most annoy them, or do them an injury. He fought bloody battles at Czarnowo, and Pultusk, and at Eylau, where he had his first experience of the northern climate, and of the despair of peoples, before which he was afterwards to yield. He performed prodigies of valour and skill during a winter passed upon the ice. When spring at length arrived, he fought and won the battle of Friedland, the greatest, perhaps, that was ever fought, both from the promptitude displayed, the profound skill of the combinations, and the importance of the results.

Alexander fell at his feet, as Francis II. and Frederick William had done before, and now the greatest conqueror of modern times paused, for he already felt an insecurity in his position. Alone at the extremity of the continent, surrounded by conquered States, and yet feeling the necessity of having some ally, Napoleon determined to seek the aid of his young conquered enemy. In fact, the Austrian alliance, which at this time was almost impossible, became still more so in consequence of the severities that had followed on the battle of Austerlitz; the Prussian alliance had been allowed to slip away; and there now remained only the Russian. Napoleon, inconstant because he had no fixed principles, passed abruptly from one scheme of policy to another, carrying with him his young competitor, a prince fickle by nature. He then conceived the idea of two great empires, that should rule the world—one in the west, which was to be his, and one in the east, which was to be Alexander's; but his was to be the dominant power. He had an interview with the czar on the raft at Tilsit, where he praised, flattered, and delighted him, and formed, on the celebrated raft, an alliance with Russia. However, explanations would have been necessary, and as the

* Our readers will undoubtedly remember that at the capitulation of Prenzlow, Lannes' soldiers uttered this same cry when they came in sight of the North Sea. Lannes wrote it to Napoleon, who made no remark.

alliance was to depend on mutual concessions, the extent of these concessions ought to be determined on. Napoleon was in a hurry, Alexander was charmed, they embraced and promised everything, but did not enter into any explanations. Alexander showed the desire he felt to take possession of Finland, to which Napoleon consented, for he had many reasons to be displeased with Sweden. Besides, Alexander showed all the desire of a young man with regard to the east. At the mention of Constantinople, Napoleon started, but restrained himself, and allowed his new ally to indulge all the dreams his imagination might suggest. It was on such a basis that the union of two empires was to rest. The treaty was signed at Tilsit. Napoleon deprived Prussia of half her possessions, and only left her the other half at the entreaty of Alexander. Of a part of the Prussian States, and some sacrifices required from Alexander, Napoleon composed the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, which was given to the King of Saxony. This was a disturbing phantom for the Poles, and alarming to her co-spoliators. With the remainder of the Prussian spoils and the Electorate of Hesse, Napoleon composed the kingdom of Westphalia, destined for his brother Jerome. Saxony, increased by the Grand Duchy and the new kingdom of Westphalia, was to form part of the Confederation of the Rhine, which would thus extend as far as the Vistula. It would be impossible to bring together a greater number of contradictions. A Germany under a French emperor, and containing the French kingdom of Westphalia, the French Duchy of Berg (which had been conferred on Murat), Saxony enlarged without desiring it, and Poland half restored; not including half-ruined Prussia, nor Austria, rendered miserable by the territory promised to Russia on the Danube; two emperors at the extremities of this un-German Germany, the one of Russia, the other of France, promising each other the most inviolable friendship, provided that each allowed the other to do what he pleased, and taking very good care not to enter into any explanation, lest they should not agree; the one dreaming of going to Constantinople, where his ally was determined not to let him enter, and the other having commenced the formation of a Poland that his ally would not allow him to finish; and beyond the chaos was England, hovering around these two allied empires with one hundred ships and two hundred frigates, implacable England, that was determined to hasten the destruction of this monstrous edifice. Such was the system conceived at Tilsit on the morrow of the immortal victory of Friedland. What a political result from so great a military triumph!

Most assuredly, had Napoleon been capable of stopping and reflecting in the midst of the torrent that bore him along, he

might, after Friedland, still better than after Austerlitz, return at once to the excellent policy of the consulate, and find it completed, consolidated, having but one inconvenience, that of being too extended. The continent, which had been vanquished at Austerlitz, might be considered as conquered definitely and without appeal at Friedland. The army of the great Frederick, which had been always cited to pique the pride of the conqueror of Marengo and Austerlitz, existed no longer. Distance, that protected Russia as the Straits of Dover protected England, had been surmounted. There was no longer any imaginable resistance on the continent. From the height of his universal rule Napoleon might raise up Prussia as though she had never been conquered, and restore her all her possessions except Hanover, which had been sacrificed to a naval peace. At that price he would have won the hearts of the Prussians, even the queen's and Blucher's, and would have found in Prussia a firm ally, for by the lesson received at Jena, and the generous act which would have followed, there was no suggestion, English, Russian, or Austrian, that could have penetrated her ears or her heart. Reasoning on this hypothesis, Napoleon would have had nothing to ask from Alexander, except that as a punishment for his defeat the Danubian provinces should pass into the hands of Austria. The latter, compensated, would have been half appeased. In short, had he exercised a still higher degree of wisdom, Napoleon would have reconstituted Germany, in confederating her around Austria and Russia, skilfully balancing the one against the other; and even in neglecting this act of wisdom he might, in preserving the ridiculous Confederation of the Rhine, cease to make new victims amongst the German princes; he might, for example, have pardoned the Elector of Hesse, and permitted Prussia to confederate Northern Germany around her. On these conditions Napoleon would have been truly master of the continent, and England, definitely isolated, would have demanded peace at any price. But we must admit, this is but a dream! There can be no resting-place amid such a torrent. Napoleon, carried away by his passions and the course of events, overturning one State after another, forming and rejecting alliances, went to the banks of the Niemen to pick up the Russian alliance from the mud of Poland, and returned intoxicated with pride, ambition, and glory, and leaving behind him in despair Austria, Prussia, and Germany, whom he hoped to awe by an alliance with that Russia for whom he was preparing a Poland, and to whom he would not give Constantinople, nor even Bucharest nor Jassy! Should we be asked how a man endowed with so great a genius, both military and political, could be guilty of such great errors, we ask in return how, though bringing into play such great talents and such generous sentiments,

the French Revolution could have caused the sanguinary follies of 1793? And we reply, that it was because reason was put in abeyance, and passion allowed to assume the ascendant. But there is less excuse for Napoleon, for an individual ought to be more easily restrained than a multitude. Unfortunately, experience proves that a man, carried away by pride, ambition, and the desire of conquest, is no more capable of restraint than the multitude itself.

At the return from Tilsit the preconcerted comedy was played. Russia, Prussia, and Austria, under compulsion, joined with France, and declared to England, that if she did not listen to the voice of her ancient allies, and still refused peace, they would unite against her in a general and destructive war—a war especially directed against her commerce, by which they would close the ports of the continent against her. And certainly England would have yielded, had such a declaration been made in the name of Prussia, restored by the generosity of Napoleon; of Austria, consoled by his policy; and of Russia, wearied by repeated defeats in carrying on war for the advantage of another. But England only laughed at a declaration torn from some by force, from others by an ephemeral union, and proudly defied the threats of this pretended European coalition. However, the continental blockade commenced. England had laid the continent under an interdict; Napoleon, in his turn, did the same to the sea in closing all European ports, both to England and to those who would submit to her maritime laws. Of all the designs he had imagined during the campaign, this was the most important and the most efficacious. Had this interdict been maintained for some years, England might probably be induced to yield. Unfortunately, the continental blockade only added to the exasperation of the countries that were obliged to submit to the demands of our policy, and Napoleon was preparing an immense compensation for England in abandoning to her the Spanish colonies.

His design on Spain was one of the causes that expedited Napoleon's proceedings at Tilsit. The throne of Philip V. had descended to the Bourbons. It was natural that in the impulse of his ambition Napoleon should appropriate it to himself. Next to France, it was the fairest throne that could be appropriated by the Bonapartes, and the necessary completion of the Empire of the West. When this great empire, already suzerain of Naples, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, and Holland, should have obtained the command of Spain, it would have nothing further to seek than the obedience of the peoples to this gigantic edifice. But it was not easy to find a pretext for such an annexation. Amongst the meannesses that at that time dishonoured the royal family of Spain, its obedience to Napoleon

may be considered as one. The good Charles IV. felt an unbounded admiration and devotion for the hero of the age. The nation itself, delighted that the First Consul had become emperor, seemed only to ask his counsels as their guide. How could war be declared against such persons? Besides, the Spanish people were ardent, proud, young-spirited, and capable of immense resistance, which could not easily be overcome. Beneath the apparent weakness of the Spanish court, great difficulties were concealed. Perhaps by waiting, a solution of the difficulty might be found in the corruption of the court of Aranjuez. An honest king, but weak and imbecile in the extreme, such as are only found towards the extinction of a race, a shameless queen, a barefaced favourite dishonouring his master, a bad son who wished to profit of these disorders to hasten his own succession, and an indignant people ready for any change that would deliver them from such an odious spectacle, offered favourable chances to an ambitious and all-powerful neighbour. It was possible that the Spanish court would sink beneath its own corruption, and ask Napoleon for a king. He had already been asked for a wife for Ferdinand, and thus offered an indirect means of attaching Spain to the great empire. But Napoleon cared for nothing indirect or remote. He wished to obtain possession of the crown of Spain fully, and immediately devised a series of plots, all tending to a universal revolt.

He had already invaded Portugal under pretence of closing it against England, and the Braganza family had fled to Brazil. This was a ray of light for him. He thought by assembling troops on the road to Lisbon, and directed towards Madrid, that the Bourbons would be terrified and fly, and that he could arrest them at Cadiz. Thanks to these machinations, the Spanish court was about to fly, and the plot was on the point of succeeding, when the people, in indignation, hurried to Aranjuez, prevented the departure, nearly strangled Godoy, and proclaimed Ferdinand VII. king, who accepted the crown snatched from his father. Napoleon, finding in this unnatural act a new excuse to replace that of which the people had deprived him, invited father and son to Bayonne, and there incited them against each other. The father raised his cane to strike his son, in Napoleon's presence, who uttered cries of indignation, and declared he had been treated with disrespect, made the father abdicate because of his incapacity, and the son on account of his unworthiness, and then, in presence of Europe, disgusted at this spectacle, and of Spain, confounded and indignant, he dared to place the crown of Philip V. on the head of his brother Joseph, and transferred that of Naples to the weak and ambitious head of poor Murat. Thus commenced the fatal

Spanish war, which during six years destroyed the finest armies of France, and prepared an impregnable battlefield for the English.

This last fault, once committed, its consequences immediately followed. Napoleon believed that eighty thousand conscripts, with a few officers from the depôts, would be sufficient to bring the Spaniards to reason. But in such a climate, in presence of a popular insurrection, which could only be conquered by well-directed masses, and overcome by obstinate and daily battles, it was not conscripts that should have been employed. Baylen was the first punishment of a serious military error and of a grave political crime. This first act—resistance to the great empire—stirred all Europe, and awoke hope in hearts consumed by hate. Napoleon, struck by the excitement manifested from Seville to Königsberg, summoned his ally, Alexander, to a consultation at Erfurth, and was then obliged to lay aside the vagueness of his magnificent promises. He finished by granting the Danubian provinces. This was too much, a thousand times too much, for it was placing the Russians at the very gates of Constantinople. Alexander, who had expected Constantinople, feigned to be content, because he wished to complete the conquest of Finland, and he thought it better to accept the banks of the Danube whilst awaiting something better. Napoleon and he embraced at parting, promising to become brothers-in-law, and half disenchanted with their mendacious alliance. Tranquillised by the interview at Erfurth, Napoleon led his best armies into Spain, those before which the continent had yielded. This was the moment awaited by Austria and all the discontented in Germany.

Then occurred a new European rising, that of 1809. Napoleon, after having driven before him, but not conquered, the Spaniards, who constantly fled, was about to overwhelm the English army under Moore, which could not fly as fast as the Spaniards, when the crossing of the Inn by the Austrians suddenly recalled him to the north. He left Valladolid at full speed, promising that in three months Austria should cease to exist, fled like lightning to Paris, from Paris to Ratisbon, and then with an army composed of one-third of the old soldiers that had remained on the Danube, and two-thirds of recruits raised in haste, he wrought miracles at Ratisbon, and again entered Vienna as a conqueror, and thus restrained all the insurrections that were ready to break forth in Germany.

However, from the obstinacy with which the victory was disputed first at Essling, and afterwards at Wagram, together with the excitement of all Germany and Europe, Napoleon felt some gleams of the truth penetrate his mind. He saw that the world needed repose, and that if he did not accord it, he would

expose himself to a universal revolt of the nations. He then formed some resolutions which were the result of this short-lived wisdom. He determined to withdraw his troops from Germany (at least from those territories that did not belong to him), in order to diminish the general anger; he determined to finish by arranging the affairs of Spain, and thus deprive England of a pretext for continuing the war; he endeavoured to make this latter power submit, by the absolute prohibition of commerce, and in this view he systematised the continental blockade. Lastly, he resolved to marry again, as if having heirs could ensure the inheritance of the crown, or as though the imperial happiness constituted the happiness of the people.

However, if these resolutions, formed under a wise inspiration, had been seriously carried out, it is possible that the gigantic order of things which Napoleon wished to establish might have acquired consistence, and perhaps duration, at least in all that was not absolutely opposed to the interests of the people concerned. If he had in reality evacuated Germany, and employed in Spain forces proportioned to the difficulty of the undertaking, and persevered, without violence, in the continental blockade, he might in all probability have obtained a maritime peace, which would have put an end to the principal sufferings of the continental nations, and suppressed a serious cause of disunion with the nations subjected to the continental blockade; and if he had crowned all by a marriage that had been really an alliance, he might have consolidated an exaggerated state of things, and perpetuated all that was not actually impossible. But his temperament and acquired habits soon led Napoleon to results diametrically opposite to these fleeting pacific inclinations. Thus, whilst evacuating some parts of Germany, he assembled masses of troops from Bremen to Hamburg, from Hamburg to Dantzig, under pretence of a continental blockade. He did still better; to simplify proceedings, he united to the empire, Holland, Bremen, Hamburg, Lübeck, and the Duchy of Oldenburg, which belonged to the imperial family of Russia. At the same time he united Rome and Tuscany to the empire. The Pope resisted; he had him arrested, carried first to Savona and then to Fontainebleau, where he kept him in respectful bondage. From Seville to Dantzig he caused several seizures of merchandise to be made, which, however, without adding anything to the efficacy of the blockade, added intensely to the irritation the people felt against the system. Whilst he was so rigorous in the observance of the blockade, especially with those who had no interest in it, he committed the strangest infractions himself, in granting the French licences to trade with England, which gave the appearance of intolerance to the whole system, for it would seem as

though France would not submit to a regimen that had been invented for her sole benefit. As to Spain, where it was of so much importance to put an end to the war, Napoleon, deceiving himself as to the real difficulties, was wrong in not sending larger forces there, or in not going there himself, for his presence would at least have encouraged existing forces to a decisive result. The war in Spain was continued indefinitely at the expense of the French army, which was exhausted, and to the great glory of the English, who alone seemed to keep the great empire in check. Then, Napoleon's marriage, which might have been a signal of peace, a hope of repose for weary Europe, instead of procuring a solid alliance, caused, on the contrary, the rupture of the union with Russia, on which all the imperial policy had been based since the day of Tilsit. It was a Russian princess that Napoleon was to have married, according to the promises made at Erfurth. But when Alexander allied himself with us, he acted singly, for his court and nation, neither as pliant nor as cunning as he, did not perceive that if he were inconsistent, this inconsistency won him Finland and Bessarabia; but to dispose of his sister's hand, it was necessary to remove his mother's prejudices, and this occasioned some delay. But Napoleon would brook no delay, and abruptly breaking off the negotiation, though it had been only just commenced, and without taking the trouble of freeing himself from his engagements, married an Austrian princess. Austria hastened to offer this connection, less from a desire to form an alliance with France than through a wish to break the bonds that united her to Russia; and Napoleon accepted it, because he had been kept waiting for the Russian princess, and because the Austrian princess was of more noble birth, and because it was an alliance such as the Bourbons had formerly contracted. From this moment the alliance with Russia was broken, an alliance which was indeed false, mendacious, but specious, and consequently useful. Napoleon was alone in the world with his pride and his army, an admirable army, but scattered from Cadiz to Kowno.

His pacific views, after the battle of Wagram, produced but this result, that Holland, the Hanseatic towns, the Duchy of Oldenburg, Tuscany, and Rome were united to the empire; the Pope was imprisoned; the continental blockade was made intolerable by its rigour and inexplicable infractions; the war in Spain was indefinitely prolonged; the Russian alliance was broken off, and no alliance, but a marriage for vanity, contracted with Austria.

Such was the position of Napoleon in 1811, after twelve years of absolute power, either as First Consul or emperor. This needed a solution. Weary of seeking it in the Peninsula,

since Massena had been stopped before the lines of Torres Vedras, Napoleon determined to seek it elsewhere. Austria and Prussia were apparently profoundly submissive; their hearts were pained, but their gestures were humble; each word they uttered was one of deference, and when some too deeply oppressed interest was to be defended, their language assumed the form of a prayer. Russia, a little less humble, was the only one that dared dispute with the master of the continent, but indeed only in the gentlest terms. It was obvious that she still counted on her geographical position, though it was evident she had been made to feel at Friedland that even at the distance of the Seine from the Niemen, Napoleon's blows could be severely felt. She complained, but with moderation, that her kinsman, the Duke of Oldenburg, had been deprived of his territories. She demanded that she should be reassured by a secret convention as to the future destiny of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, which was nothing, but might become Poland. Then she resisted the continental blockade. She said that each nation should be allowed to make such commercial laws for itself as would be judged best suited to its interests; she had promised to close the Russian rivers against British commerce, and she had kept her word; that, indeed, some English vessels had entered under the American flag, but they had been very few, and could not be prevented without exciting a revolt amongst the people. All this, we must remember, was said with infinite moderation, and supported with the most solid reasoning. Russia said nothing of the insult to the Russian princess, but she showed by her manner that she felt it deeply.

These objections made Napoleon indignant. To resist him even noiselessly and unknown to the world, was, in his opinion, to give the signal of revolt. If any one, no matter where, offered opposition to his arbitrary will, he considered that he was defied. In him, calculation was always united to the anger of pride. The Spanish war seeming difficult to terminate, and above all, likely to be protracted; no effect being yet produced by the continental blockade, and the Boulogne expedition having been long since abandoned, Napoleon determined to bring the present state of affairs to a conclusion on the banks of the Dwina and Dnieper. He pictured to himself that when from Cadiz to Moscow there would be no longer a shadow of resistance, and when Russia would be reduced to the same position as Austria or Prussia, he should have resolved the European question, that overwearied England would yield, and that the French empire, extending from Rome to Amsterdam, from Amsterdam to Lübeck, would be firmly established, having as vassals the kingdom of Spain, Naples, Italy, and Westphalia! Thus, it was the rage of pride, joined to the expectation of

finishing in the north what did not seem likely to terminate in the south, that furnished the true causes of the Russian war.

This fatal undertaking was commenced with formidable resources, and began at Dresden with the unheard-of spectacle which Napoleon and the sovereigns of the continent presented for a whole month—of power on one side, and dependence on the other. The monarchs, humbler and more mortified than ever, presented themselves before their master with humility writ upon their brows, but hatred in their hearts. Although Napoleon, far from having lost any of his qualities as a great captain, had, on the contrary, gained all that experience could add to great genius; still the art of war had deteriorated somewhat from the very vastness of his aims, and the precipitation of his enterprises. In every art, indeed, to do too much is to do ill. The conceptions were undoubtedly more vast, but the execution less perfect. And especially in the Russian war, the luxury which had been introduced amongst our generals, the precautions that were taken against an unknown and dreaded climate, had loaded the army with baggage that would be inconvenient even for short distances, but overwhelming for great. Besides this, the desire to increase the number of soldiers, and the habit of finishing all by a skilful disposition of masses, had introduced a kind of negligence as to the quality of the troops. The corps of Marshal Davout alone remained a model, and two hundred thousand men such as his would have gained the cause that was lost by the six hundred thousand that were marched beyond the Niemen. But—singular example of the progress of meanness under despotic rule!—a somewhat spiteful feeling was engendered against Marshal Davout, because of the strict and severe discipline in which he kept his troops amid the general laxity. Thus that art which had almost attained theoretic perfection in Napoleon's conceptions, had become somewhat corrupted in practice. The campaign of 1812 represented an expedition in the style of Xerxes. Scarcely eight days had elapsed after the passage of the Niemen when two hundred thousand men abnadoned their standards, and presented the deplorable and contagious example of a breaking up of the army. Perhaps if Napoleon had paused, serried his ranks, and consolidated his base of operation, he might have been able to inflict a mortal blow on the Russian colossus. But in presence of observant Europe, filled with silent but profound hatred, and ardently desiring our ruin, one of those prodigies with which Napoleon was wont to astonish her was needed, such as Austerlitz, Jena, or Friedland. Napoleon went in pursuit of this prodigy even to the banks of the Moskowa, and there, indeed, he found a prodigy on the 7th of September 1812, but it was a prodigy of carnage, and nothing definite

—the definite he must seek in Moscow itself, where, indeed, he found something wondrous: he beheld a fearful patriotic sacrifice, the conflagration of Moscow, and then remained a whole month uncertain and hesitating at the extremity of the civilised world. Never, indeed, did he show more firmness or more talent in combination than in the twenty and odd days passed and lost in Moscow. But the exhausted powers of his lieutenants were not equal to the means by which he meant to free himself from the abyss into which he had sprung. It was necessary to return. The army, which contained in its ranks too many foreigners and too many young men acted upon by the climate and the distance, at the same time that it was labouring beneath its baggage, fell into dissolution in the midst of the frozen immensity of Russia. At the commencement of the retreat Napoleon sunk for some days into a state of stupefaction, which suggested an idea of weakness of mind, but these were only a few days spent in contemplation in realising this prodigious change of fortune. At Beresina his natural disposition shone forth again, and never sank more, not even at Waterloo. Those who blame the military genius of Napoleon at this epoch are guilty of an error of judgment. It is not his military genius that should be blamed, but his frenzied will, that, impatient of every obstacle, wished to extend its influence from men to nature, where it found that resistance that man no longer offered, and it was beneath the unfettered violence of the elements he sank. It was not the soldier that erred and was punished by the effects of his own fault, but the despot, that acted after the fashion of the despots of Asia. In another age, and with less intelligence than he possessed, Napoleon might, perhaps, like Xerxes, have whipped the sea because it disobeyed him. However, there was one thing that bore some resemblance to such extravagance, for during several months the French journalists of that time poured forth unheard-of maledictions on the climate of Russia, the sole cause, they said, of our misfortunes. The external form of things changes, but human folly is ever the same.

Napoleon, deserting his army, as his detractors say, or as the impartial historian will say, quitting his soldiers without compunction, in order to go and prepare another army, crossed Germany secretly, Germany more stunned than he, and needing some reflection to enable her to believe in his change of fortune. He had time to escape and reseize the reins of the empire at Paris. Though France was confounded, she hastened to supply him with everything necessary to avenge our arms, feeling at the same time no indulgence for his errors. He employed these last resources with a military genius tried and improved by misfortune. Germany, lightened of her bonds, held forth

her hands to Russia, and Austria was alone wanting to the union against us in Europe. The safety or ruin of France depended on the manner in which this power would be treated. Austria assumed a position that was at once honourable and diplomatic, which we had no right to expect from her, and which was due alone to the minister who had negotiated Marie Louise's marriage, who skilfully sought to bring about the transition from alliance to war. Austria frankly and boldly interposed as arbiter between the enslaved nations of Europe, who wished that all the oppressed should unite against their common oppressor, and France, who called upon her by the ties of blood. She certainly asked very little: she only required that French Germany, qualified by the title of Confederation of the Rhine, should be given up; that the indispensable ports, Lübeck, Hamburg, and Bremen, should be restored to Germany; that Trieste should be given back to herself; and that the false Poland, called the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, should be abandoned. On these terms she would leave Westphalia, Lombardy, and Naples in the quality of vassal kingdoms; Holland, Piedmont, Tuscany, and the Roman States as departments of France; but no mention was made of Spain. She thus yielded to us twice as much as Napoleon's son could keep. Not believing that Austria would seriously dare to constitute herself arbitress between him and Europe, and hoping that since the war had come nearer to the Rhine, he could sustain it with vigour, Napoleon hastened, whilst the negotiations were going on, to gain the two battles of Lutzen and Bautzen, where, without cavalry, and with infantry composed of children, he conquered the best troops of Europe; then treating Austria as an inferior, and taking no heed of her advice, or even of her solicitations, convinced that he could restore his grandeur without her or in spite of her, he broke the armistice of Dresden, and recommenced that fatal strife with all Europe which he opened by the victory of Dresden, one of the most brilliant conquests of his reign; he commenced a struggle which might perhaps have ended successfully for him, had he confined himself to defend the line of the Elbe from Königstein to Magdeburg. But in the rash hope of recovering all his ancient glory at a single blow, he wished to extend his left wing as far as Berlin, and his right to the neighbourhood of Breslau, in order to intercept any supplies that might be sent from Prague to Berlin; but whilst he was himself victorious on the Elbe, he was conquered in the persons of his lieutenants, both on the Breslau and Berlin routes; he was then obliged to concentrate his forces, but too late; he lost the line of the Elbe, which he sought to reconquer at Leipsic, where, in one of the greatest military encounters recorded in history, he fought

for three consecutive days without abandoning the field of battle. But, forced to retreat, he was assailed by a fearful accident—the explosion of the bridge of Leipsic—an accident fortuitous in appearance, but in reality the inevitable result of the gigantic scale on which Napoleon conducted all his plans. There he lost a portion of his army, and this deplorable accident caused a second retreat from the Saale to the Rhine, which, though shorter than that from Russia, was almost as disastrous. The army which France had furnished to repair the disaster of 1812 was almost annihilated on the Rhine by typhus fever.

Once on the Rhine, Austria, persisting in her prudent policy, offered peace to Napoleon on the conditions of the treaty of Lunéville—that is, France reduced to her natural limits. He did not refuse; but he expressed his acceptance with an ambiguity which partook both of pride and the fear of weakening his pretensions, by showing too much eagerness to treat: a new fault, which was, indeed, the almost inevitable consequence of his previous errors. But Europe, that had trembled at the very idea of invading France, finding, the nearer she approached it, how much Napoleon had alienated the hearts of the people, profited of the ambiguity of his language, and withdrawing her offers, marched directly on Paris. Napoleon, who thought himself invincible on this side of the Rhine, and believed he had sufficient time to assemble the necessary troops, found he had only the miserable remains of Leipsic to oppose all Europe—that is to say, 60,000 or 70,000 men, some exhausted, and some mere children, against 300,000 trained soldiers. Now, again, he was offered peace, but with the France of 1790. For the first time he was right in opposition to his counsellors, and displaying the noble pride of a citizen instead of the insensate haughtiness of an Asiatic conqueror, fully comprehending that the France of 1790 would suit the Bourbons better than him, he refused the conditions of Chatillon, and with the wreck of his army struggled to the last hour with indomitable energy.

It may, indeed, be said, that history does not offer two such spectacles as he presented during the February and March of 1814. His lieutenants, assailed on every frontier, retired in disorder, and betook themselves in consternation to Chalons. Thither he betakes himself alone, with no other reinforcement than his presence, encourages them, gives them new life, reanimates his soldiers, and then hurries forward to anticipate the invasion at Brienne and Rothière; fights with four, sometimes with five to one against him; astonishes his adversaries by the force of his attacks, and succeeds in arresting their progress; thus profiting of the few days' respite that had been gained at the point of the sword to provide the Marne, Aube, the Seine, and the Yonne with indispensable troops, and to preserve a

sufficient force at the centre to be ready to hasten to any threatened point, he waited, like a tiger on the spring, for the chance that, in the profoundness of his genius, he had foreseen, namely, that the enemy would divide their forces between the rivers that flow towards Paris. This foresight having been justified by events, he hastened to encounter Blucher separated from Schwarzenberg, and overpowered him in four days; then returning to Schwarzenberg, he put him to flight, drew him from the gates of Paris to Troyes, and then, for the last time, he was offered peace—that is, the crown—but he refused the offer because it did not include the natural limits of the country. He then attacks Blucher anew, shuts him up between the Marne and the Aisne, and is on the point of annihilating him and restoring his own fallen fortunes, when Soissons flings open its gates! Nowise troubled by this sudden change of fortune, he fought with indomitable tenacity at Craonne and Laon, and is on the point of winning back the victory, when an error of Marmont destroys the possibility. He then retires half conquered, but not discomfited—does not yet despair, though the manœuvre of hurrying from Blucher to Schwarzenberg was no longer possible, because it had become too evident to the enemy—because Blucher had not been overcome—in a word, because they were too near each other! Always inexhaustible in resources, he determined to fall back on the fortresses, and rally the garrisons, and take up a position with 100,000 men on the enemy's rear. Before executing this daring march, he made an attack on Schwarzenberg's flank at Arcis-sur-Aube, in order to draw the Austrian general towards him; hastens then to Nancy, when the enemy, marching on Paris, succeeded in forcing the gates. Napoleon returns in haste, finds the enemy dispersed on both banks of the Seine, and is preparing to crush them, when his lieutenants wrest the sword from his hand, punishing him too late for the bad use he had made of it; and he, the successful warrior, terminates his career, after displaying all the resources of his character and his genius in a desperate war, in which he added to all the brilliancy, daring, and fertility of resource exhibited on his former campaigns, one quality that he had still to display—and which he then displayed even to a miracle—unchangeable constancy in misfortune!

Such was Napoleon's career from the commencement to the close. We have recapitulated it in a few pages, to present it better as a whole; let us now compress it into a still smaller space, that we may draw from it the profound lessons it contains.

In the midst of France, exhausted of her blood, and disgusted by the scenes she had witnessed for the last ten years, General Bonaparte seized the dictatorship on the eighteenth Brumaire, and in doing so, whatever may be said, he committed neither

fault nor crime. The dictatorship was not then an invention of servility, but a social necessity. In order that liberty should be possible, it is necessary that the government, the opposing parties in the State, and even individuals, should listen to all opinions with unalterable patience. This is scarcely to be expected even when men, having nothing serious to reproach each other with, betake themselves to calumny. But to imagine that the men of those times could discuss public affairs in a peaceful spirit is an illusion, when we remember that they could justly accuse each other of murder, rapine, and of leaguing with the external enemy. It is not for seizing the dictatorship that we ought to blame General Bonaparte, but for the use he made of his power from 1800 to 1814.

When, amid the frightful disasters of a long revolution, his genius, as rational as it was great, applied itself to repair the faults of others, he left nothing to be desired. He found the French inflamed one against another; he pacified Vendée; he recalled the emigrants, and even restored them part of their possessions. He found schism established and disturbing the consciences of all, and as he could not remove the evil by his sword, he respectfully addressed himself to the spiritual head of the Catholic universe, whom he himself had replaced upon his throne, induced him by the influence of his reasoning to recognise the legitimate results of the French Revolution, obtained from him especially the approbation of the sale of ecclesiastical property, the deposition of the ancient, and the institution of a new and orthodox clergy, and the pardon of those priests who had taken the oath or had broken their vows. After a negotiation that continued nearly a year, he drew up that masterpiece of skill and patience, the Concordat—regulating all the relations between Church and State, and which, of all our institutes, is the only one that still endures. The Revolution had commenced to frame civil laws under the influence of the wildest passions; Napoleon took up the work and completed it under the inspiration of good sense and of the experience of ages. He re-established the necessary taxes, which had been abolished by the demagogue flatterers of the multitude; he established an infallible system of finance, and instituted an active, efficient, and honest administration. Externally proud, resolute, but reserved, he knew how to unite force with persuasion. In Switzerland he effected a pacification like to that of Vendée, by means of the Act of Mediation, which, though under another name, continues the definite constitution of that country. He reconstituted Germany, which had been thrown into confusion by the war, by compensating the dispossessed princes with the property of the Church, and by establishing a just equilibrium between the confederate princes. Thus holding

with firm and equitable hand the balance of German interests, which he allowed to incline slightly towards Prussia, without at the same time offending Austria, he prepared the Prussian alliance, the only one that was then possible, and at the same time equal to our wants. Having thus effected all the good that was practicable or possible, both at home and abroad, admired by the world, adored by France, nothing more remained for him than to rest in this unsullied glory, and allow the wearied world to rest with him.

Vain dream! this man, who had so truly estimated and so wisely suppressed the passions of others, could not restrain himself when his own were wounded. The emigrants who had taken refuge in London insulted him; England did not prevent them, because, by the constitution of her laws, she could not, and moreover, she listened to them because it flattered her jealousy. What wonder that it was so; what cause could it be of surprise, much less of anger! But this hero, this sage, whom the world admired, could no longer control himself. He demanded vengeance, and because he did not receive such as his anger demanded, he insulted the ambassador of Great Britain. When he needed but to wait a few days, and the English would have evacuated Malta, he broke the peace of Amiens, and thus left Malta for ever to Britain. The emigrants who had insulted him conspired against his life, having some princes as accomplices or confidants. Not being able to punish either the one or the other, he seized on neutral ground a prince who possibly knew nothing of these plots, but who certainly took no part in them, and had him ruthlessly shot. Europe exclaimed against this violation of neutral territory: he insulted Europe. Alas! in his excited mind passion had conquered reason, and every change of this powerful intellect becoming a cause of revolution in the entire world, the firm and sustained policy of the consulate gave place to the wild and reckless government of the empire. This was the first great fault of the First Consul, and the most important, for it was the source of every other.

At war with Great Britain, the First Consul wished to fight her hand to hand, and cross the Straits of Dover. But to pass the sea in safety, it would be necessary to tranquillise the continent, and he took Genoa. Then the continent rose, and the maritime war was exchanged for a continental one, which was not to be regretted, for it gave him an opportunity of fighting England in the persons of her allies, and decide the question by land instead of by sea. Having crushed Austria at Ulm and at Austerlitz, he sent Russia home conquered and ashamed; and Prussia, that came to dictate to him, he covered with ridicule. This was the time to resume the

exercise of his reason, and consolidate and extend the peace of Amiens and Lunéville. Had he made Austria suffer only inevitable losses, compensating her even when necessary; had he, by his consideration for her feelings, or by gifts that caused her no shame, consoled Prussia for the embarrassment of her position; had he asked nothing of Russia but that she should stand aloof in a quarrel in which she had no concern, Napoleon would have isolated England, and compelled her to treat on whatever conditions he pleased, and he would thus have resumed the consular policy at the same time that his imperial title would have been universally recognised, and he would have obtained some useless though brilliant acquisitions. Unfortunately, instead of considering his triumphs at Ulm and Austerlitz as what they were and what they ought to be, a means of conquering England by land, he only looked upon them as an opportunity of obtaining universal empire. This was his second great fault, and the one that was destined to involve him permanently in the practices of a madly acquisitive policy. He then proceeded in quick succession to take Naples for his brother Joseph, Lombardy for his adopted son Eugène, Holland for his brother Louis—all three destined to become vassal sovereigns of the great Empire of the West; he overturned that Germany that he had reconstituted, and which was one of his greatest works, and created a French Germany under the title of the Confederation of the Rhine, a Germany from which Austria and Prussia were excluded; he placed the crown of the Cæsars on his head, and humbled Prussia by the gift of Hanover! and still he was so powerful at this time that these excesses did not render peace impossible, so ardently was it desired, even at any price. Russia had sent M. d'Oubril as ambassador to Napoleon, and England sent Lord Lauderdale, and their only demand, after all his extravagant enterprises, was that Sicily should be given to the Bourbons, and Sardinia to the house of Savoy. Napoleon, wishing to treat separately with each, that he might the better bend them to his purpose, lost the opportunity of making peace with both, a peace that would have been the consecration of all his daring acts; he refused a simple explanation to Prussia on the subject of the restitution of Hanover to George III., and consequently found himself in the centre of a universal war. But he had the best soldiers in the world, and was himself the greatest commander of modern times, perhaps of any time. In a few months he had annihilated the Prussian army at Jena, and completed the destruction of the Russian troops at Friedland. From this day forth, envy could no longer wound his pride, it could no longer pique him with the army of the great Frederick, an army that he had overpowered in a single day;

nor could distance any longer render Russia invincible. Now was the time, even more opportune than after Austerlitz, when he ought to have resumed a wise policy, and made use of his power on the continent to deprive England for ever of her allies. He might, for example, have gratified Austria by the cession of the Danubian provinces, and have made this gift Russia's sole punishment. He might have raised up prostrate Prussia by restoring to her all that she had lost by her imprudence, and have overwhelmed her with joy, surprise, and gratitude; and certainly, when he had consoled Austria, attached Prussia for ever to France, and twice punished Russia for imprudent interference, isolated England would have surrendered to our arms; and the gigantic empire, already sketched by Napoleon, might have been securely founded. But the same cause that had made him abandon the moderate policy of 1803, and prevented his resuming it after Austerlitz, still subsisted; and intoxicated with pride, seeking to systematise his faults, that he might excuse them to himself, excluding from his consideration, as if they did not exist, greater number of the States of Europe, he would only recognise two great empires, that of the east and that of the west, each resting on the other, and gaining strength from this mutual support, and thus enabling him to revel in the exercise of unlicensed power over the enslaved world. This was the third of Napoleon's great faults; for this Russian alliance, which henceforth formed the sole basis of his policy, must either be false, or a crime against Europe—false, if he wished to exercise unlimited power himself, and not allow the same to Russia; a crime against Europe, if he opened the route to Constantinople to his ally. Alas! hurried along by the torrent of conquest, his progress was so rapid, and he gave himself so little time to reflect, that he never decided how far he would allow Russia to proceed towards Constantinople, or what should be done with the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, that ought to become Poland or nothing! What he hoped was, that with the assistance of Russia he could decide the Spanish question; that became his ruling thought. Spain, possessed by the Bourbons, was all that was wanting to his vast empire, and he was anxious to make it one of the vassal kingdoms of the west. Spain, submissive and ashamed of her condition, asking him for a system of policy, a government, and a wife, might perhaps be induced to ask him for a king if he had waited. But he had become as incapable of patience as of moderation, and sought to make the Bourbons fly from Aranjuez, that he might stop them at Cadiz. As the Spanish people had opposed this flight, he induced them to come to Bayonne, where, exciting the father and son against each other, he took advantage of their dissension to declare the one

incompetent and the other unworthy, and finished this sombre comedy by an usurpation that disgusted Europe, excited Spain to revolt, and turned it into a new Vendée, in the midst of which a high-spirited people like the Spaniards, and an obstinate nation like the English, waged an endless war against us. This was the fourth fault of the imperial reign, and certainly the greatest since the abandonment of the moderate policy of 1803, for it caused the ruin of the French army, the sole support of the Bonaparte dynasty, since Napoleon had made his reign a reign of physical force.

Baylen—fatal name—was the first punishment of the crime committed at Bayonne. When a revolted peasantry rose up against our soldiers and forced them to capitulate, dejected Europe resumed her courage, and in 1809, Austria, impatient of the yoke, gave the signal for a general revolt. Napoleon's best soldiers being in Spain, he advanced with conscripts to meet Austria, and accomplishing wonders at Ratisbon, he exposed himself to great danger at Essling by his too great precipitation, performed new wonders at Wagram, and thus put an end to the first European revolt, for which Austria had given the signal too early.

However, the ground had become unsteady beneath his tread, and some gleams of reason penetrated to his excited brain. He felt the necessity of appeasing Europe, and formed the determination to evacuate Germany, to carry on the continental blockade with perseverance, to finish the Spanish war, and by this twofold means to reduce England to peace. He would then rest, and allow the world to rest, and marry that he might have an heir to this universal monarchy.

With these pacific views, Napoleon, in the course of fifteen months, united Holland, Bremen, Hamburg, Lübeck, Oldenburg Tuscany, and Rome to the empire, had the Pope imprisoned, forbade the merchants of the continent to hold any communication with the English, at the same time that he granted licences to Frenchmen to go to London and return; he married an Austrian archduchess, without deigning to break off formally his negotiation for the hand of Alexander's sister, because he had been kept waiting; and thus terminated that mendacious Russian alliance, which had gained Finland and Bessarabia for Russia, and furnished us the opportunity of ruining our fortunes in Spain.

Nevertheless, the continent, although full of hatred, submitted under the influence of the battle of Wagram. Russia alone ventured to offer some objections touching the territory of Oldenburg, which had been taken from a prince of his family, and to the manner in which the continental blockade was put in operation, and to the successive augmentation of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw until it had almost become Poland. Then

Napoleon, finding the Spanish war and the continental blockade too tedious, wished to enter Russia, thinking that when he should have punished at that distance a power that had dared to raise its voice in objection, he would have terminated his fearful struggle with the civilised world. This was the fifth great fault, and it would be difficult to say in what degree it surpassed or fell behind its predecessors in folly; for one would be embarrassed to decide which was the greatest error—to have broken the peace of Amiens unseasonably, or to have sought universal monarchy after Austerlitz; to have, after Friedland, founded his policy on the inexplicable Russian alliance, to have gone to war with Spain, or to have marched to Moscow. However that may be, followed by 600,000 soldiers, he now commenced a struggle both against man and nature. But nature can defend herself better than man, and she did it now by alternately opposing to the conqueror of the Alps, distance, heat, cold, and famine. However, she might herself have been conquered by time! But Napoleon had not time. The world, secretly leagued against him, left him none, and he would have needed to complete his conquest in one campaign. He was overwhelmed by the most tragic catastrophe that time shall ever bring forth.

Desolated France generously furnished him with the means of repairing his own glory and ours, and he was about to do so, after Lutzen and Bautzen, even in a higher degree than was desirable, when the insensate hope of recovering all his losses at a single blow made him commit his sixth and last great fault, for it consummated his ruin; this was refusing the conditions of Prague, and extending his line of operations from Dresden to Berlin, whilst, if he had concentrated his forces on the Elbe, he might have rendered his position impregnable. Forced to abandon Germany, he received a last offer, that of the Rhine frontier, to which he had the folly to return an ambiguous reply, through fear of showing too great a desire to negotiate, and whilst he lost a month in explanations, Europe, profiting of this month to inquire into the state of France, withdrew her offer and crossed the Rhine. Napoleon, then employing the same talents, the same force of character, to resist those humiliating conditions that he had before employed to his own ruin, finished, as he had commenced his reign, like a great man—a reign that was vitiated in mid-career by an ambition after the fashion of Asiatic conquerors—a wonderful reign, of which it may be said, that nothing could be more perfect than its commencement, nothing more extravagant than its mid-course, and nothing more heroic than its termination.

Thus this great and doom-bringing man, after having attained perfection during the consulate, abandons, at the first offence

offered to his pride, the firm and moderate policy of 1803, is about to attack England, but is turned from it by the continent that he has himself provoked, but which he cruelly punishes. It now only needed an effort of generosity and wisdom, and he might have returned to the practice of a sound policy, first at Austerlitz, again at Friedland; but, all-powerful in his influence over others, and infinitely weak in his empire over himself, he dashes into the vague region of chimeras, and frames, in his airy dreams, a vast Empire of the West that is to embrace civilised Europe from Poland to Spain. To effect the realisation of this dream he flatters the Russian visionary views, but receives at Essling and Wagram a first notice of the feeling of exasperated Europe. He thinks to profit of it, and might, perhaps, with moderation and patience, have consolidated his chimerical empire, but, as incapable of exercising patience as moderation, he wishes to hasten events, marches into Russia, and only hastens his ruin. Still he might, after Lutzen and Bautzen, have conserved his power in a higher degree than was even desirable, but he refused the offer of peace at Prague, a chance which fortune never again presented him, and he fell to rise no more. Such, in a few words, is the history of Napoleon's reign.

If, in order to understand aright this extraordinary spectacle, we draw back a step, as in presence of an object too vast to be judged at a near view, if we recur to the times of the French Revolution, then everything is explained, and we see that this reign is one of the phases of this immense Revolution, a phase tragic and wondrous as the others, and we recognise it by this essential characteristic of the imperial reign—excess. From 1789 to 1800 we behold the first outburst of the French Revolution; from 1800 to 1814 we see its reaction on itself, a reaction of which the empire is the condensed expression, and in both the wild whirl of passion is the essential characteristic. The French Revolution dashes into the arena of social reform, with a heart full of generous sentiments, with a mind overflowing with great and fruitful ideas; she encounters obstacles, is astonished, becomes angry—as if the chariot of humanity in rolling over the earth is never to feel the friction—she flies into a rage, becomes intoxicated and furious with passion, pours human blood in torrents on the scaffold, disgusts the world, is herself disgusted at her own excesses, and the offspring of this feeling is a man mighty as the Revolution, imbued with the same desire of effecting good, wishing it ardently, wishing to effect it instantly, by any means, and the consequence is that the projected good disappears from view, convicting him of a thousand self-contradictions, and inflicting on him many severe lessons. Ah, when it is needed to admonish the French Revolution, how admirably Napoleon does so! He condemns regicide,

civil war, schism, the captivity of the Pope, a universal republic, the fury of war; he recalls the emigrants, reinstates the Pope at Rome, concludes the Concordat, and grants Europe the peace of Lunéville and Amiens. But the world presents a succession of obstacles, in whatever direction we march, either forwards or backwards. At the first error committed by his adversaries, like the true son of his mother—the Revolution—intemperate as she, refusing to brook either resistance or delay, the prudent consul flies into a rage, commits regicide at Vincennes, revives schism, detains the Pope prisoner at Fontainebleau, relapses into war, now general and prolonged, substitutes for the universal republic a universal monarchy, and—phenomenon of unheard-of passion—like the Revolution, whose continuator, representative, or son he may be called, left behind him immense calamities, high principles, and dazzling glory. The calamities and glory belong to France, the principles to the world at large.

If, after the astonishment, admiration, and terror we experience in contemplating this spectacle, we wish to draw from it a profound, a never-to-be-forgotten lesson, we must be convinced in the secrecy of our own hearts—whether we contemplate the operation of revolutions, even the most glorious and the most praiseworthy, or whether we weigh the conduct of the most highly gifted amongst men—we must be convinced that self-restraint is man's first duty. "Commonplace moral," we hear re-echoed on every side. Yes, commonplace, we admit, but ever new, if we only consider how succeeding generations profit of it. It is a lesson that must be continually repeated, and is in itself the concentration of all public and private wisdom. In fact, nations and individuals, especially great nations and high-minded individuals, are never wanting in heroic impulses. What they do fail in is forbearance, cool reason, and self-control. For men, private or public, ordinary or extraordinary, for nations, above all, during revolution, which are often only an unpremeditated impulse towards good, self-restraint is the great secret by which we can retain our honesty, or become useful or happy; in a word, it is the great secret of success. If we cannot restrain, that is, if we cannot govern ourselves, we injure the cause, whose triumph, in the excess of our affection, we had endeavoured to secure, by violence or precipitation! Let us always keep three great examples before our eyes—the convention destroyed liberty, Napoleon destroyed the greatness of France, and the house of Bourbon destroyed the cause of legitimacy—that is to say, they destroyed the cause whose success they had each a special mission to serve! But we go too far when we say destroyed, for great principles can never be destroyed in this world. They are only compromised.

After having pronounced judgment on Napoleon's reign, it becomes our duty to pronounce judgment on the man himself, as soldier, politician, administrator, legislator, thinker, and writer, and assign him a place in that glorious family that reckons amongst its members, Alexander, Hannibal, Cæsar, Charlemagne, and Frederick the Great. But to pronounce a correct judgment, it is necessary that the great man's career should be finished. The end of his career was not attained at the isle of Elba. Providence reserved two further trials for Napoleon. He was destined to stand again face to face with the powers of Europe, busy dividing our spoils amongst themselves, and disturbed in the division by his return from the isle of Elba. He was in a special manner destined to stand face to face with reviving liberty. This is the spectacle presented by 1815, during the period called "the hundred days," a mournful and tragic spectacle, whose details we purpose to retrace. After which we shall judge the man as a whole. And after having judged the man impartially, our task will be finished, and we shall leave to posterity the task of pronouncing judgment on our judgment, if, indeed, posterity will deign to take the trouble of correcting or confirming our opinion.

BOOK LIV.

RESTORATION OF THE BOURBONS.

THE departure of Napoleon for the isle of Elba had delivered the Bourbons from the presence of a formidable enemy, who, though conquered, still alarmed the victorious powers. But although the monster—as the imperial government was called—was decapitated, the trunk remained, and its scattered fragments still agitated Europe by their convulsive throes. Various detachments of troops that had not yet received intelligence of what had occurred at Paris, or who refused to believe these accounts, were dispersed through Flanders, Holland, Westphalia, Italy, Dauphiné, Languedoc, and Spain. The first care of the provisional government had been to despatch agents to inform these troops of the entrance of the allies into Paris, the abdication of Napoleon, and the re-establishment of the Bourbons on the throne of France. The replies were expected with a certain amount of anxiety, for the provisional government would not have wished to command the siege of such places as Strasburg, Mayence, Lille, Antwerp, Flushing, the Texel, Hamburg, Magdeburg, Wurzburg, Palma-Nova, Venice, Mantua, Alessandria, Genoa, Lerida, Tortosa, &c., &c., nor would the allies like to be obliged to undertake such enterprises. Nor was it without considerable difficulty that the voice of reason could find its way to the hearts of the old soldiers that guarded these remote posts, and at whose head Napoleon had placed energetic commanders, devoted to his interest and that of France. Their last acts are worthy of a place in history, and clearly illustrate the position in which Napoleon left affairs, and in which the Bourbons found them. We shall give a rapid glance over these events.

The illustrious Carnot defended Antwerp, whilst the brave and talented General Maison occupied by his activity and courage the whole extent of country lying between Antwerp, Lille, and Valenciennes. It must not be forgotten how Carnot, who of his own will had stood aloof from the empire and the emperor, had, as soon as he saw our frontiers invaded, discerned, more by the impulses of his heart than the reasonings of his head, the danger that threatened the cause of the Revolution

and France, and wrote to Napoleon to offer him, as he said, his *sexagenary arm*, not as an aid, but as an example. Napoleon received, as it deserved, this patriotic offer, and confided to Carnot the task most suited to him, that of defending Antwerp —Antwerp, the most magnificent creation of the empire, the depôt of our maritime riches, the bulwark of our Schelde frontier. Carnot had established order in the fortress, inspired the garrison with a sentiment of the most absolute devotedness, and shown the enemy the impossibility of obtaining, otherwise than by a regular and protracted siege, this object of England's intense hatred. The besiegers might indeed avail themselves of the barbarous alternative of bombardment. Carnot, in concert with Admiral Missiessy, had made preparations for such an event. The *escadre* was covered with earth and dung, the magazines and the most exposed works were protected with blinds, and then, with heroic impassibility, the besieged supported during several days a continuous shower of bombs and howitzers, taking care to extinguish instantly the flames that from time to time sprung up in different places. The besiegers, after having exhausted their ammunition, saw themselves reduced to a simple blockade, and Carnot, having well victualled the garrison, proved unquestionably that his patience was as indomitable as his courage.

The active troops shut up in Antwerp in consequence of the movement of the invading armies were a great loss to General Maison, who had only 6000 men for the occupation of Flanders. Amongst the troops shut up in Antwerp there was a division of the young guard, consisting of 4000 foot and some hundred horse, which would have been a great assistance in defending the frontier. Consequently, Carnot and Maison exerted themselves, the one to find the means of sending off these guards, and the other to secure their safe passage through a host of enemies.

General Maison, after having hastily thrown some depôt battalions and some provisions into the fortresses of Bergen-op-Zoom, Ostend, Dunkirk, Valenciennes, Maubeuge, Condé, and Lille, hastened with from 5000 to 6000 men from one of these fortresses to the other, relieving sometimes this, sometimes that, destroying from time to time vast detachments of the enemy, and by a series of ambuscades giving occupation to the Prince of Saxe-Weimar, who with between 40,000 and 50,000 men had not succeeded in expelling us from the labyrinth of our fortresses.* Whilst General Maison thus executed actual

* Napoleon, who had only learned the commencement of the campaign in Belgium, and who had only heard of the retreat from Brussels upon Lille, had often in his correspondence complained of General Maison. He would have spoken in a different tone had he had time to appreciate fully this campaign, which at that period excited the admiration of the military world.

prodigies of daring and activity, several of our commanders won for themselves unfading laurels by resisting formidable attacks with a handful of men. General Bizanet, obliged to defend with 2700 men the fortress of Bergen-op-Zoom, which would have required a garrison of 12,000, was not able to prevent Graham's soldiers, who, were favoured by a popular movement, from ascending the escalade and entering the city as victors. But undisturbed by this disaster, General Bizanet rushed upon the English columns, overthrew them one after the other, killed 1500, and captured 2500 men. The Prince of Saxe-Weimar, having made a similar attempt on Maubeuge, which was defended by Colonel Schouller of the artillery, at the head of 1000 national guards and custom-house officers, had seen his artillery dismounted, his soldiers repulsed, and his enterprise defeated in the most humiliating manner.

General Maison, who was seeking a means by which the Roguet division might safely join him, profited of the opportunity afforded by the failure of the attempt against Maubeuge, and advanced towards Antwerp amidst hosts of the enemy. Uniting the two infantry divisions Barrois and Solignac, that were 6000 strong, and the cavalry division of Castex, consisting of 1100 horse, he left Lille under pretext of going to aid Maubeuge, overthrew the detachments that occupied Courtray, feigned to pursue them in the direction of Oudenarde and Brussels, when suddenly turning towards Ghent, which he captured, he took up a position before this city, awaiting the arrival of General Roguet, to whom he had sent intelligence of his approach. Carnot having received timely information, sent out of Antwerp the Roguet division, which joined General Maison at Ghent, increasing his numbers by nearly 5000 men.

General Maison, now at the head of 12,000 men, saw numerous columns of the enemy abandon the blockade of the fortresses to march against him; he especially noted the Prince of Saxe-Weimar, who was preparing to cut off his retreat with an army of 30,000 men. General Maison did not lose an instant; he marched straight through Thielmann's corps, of whom he killed or captured 1200, and after an expedition of six continuous days, entered victoriously into Lille, at the head of a little army, all imbued with the spirit of their commander, and ready again to achieve such deeds as they had lately performed. It was whilst affairs were in this position that General Maison received intelligence of what had occurred at Paris, despatched officially by the provisional government. This general, an ancient aide-de-camp of Bernadotte, and an old soldier of the Rhenish army, was not strongly attached to Napoleon; but untainted by the spirit of intrigue, though endowed with great activity of mind and character, he was incapable of becoming the associate of

plotters. Thus, though surrounded by Bernadotte's agents, he repulsed them, threatening to have them shot if they renewed their propositions. But destiny having pronounced its decrees, he submitted, and informed his soldiers of the events that had occurred in France, whose consequences would be henceforth irresistible, and proposed to them to give in their adhesion. His generals unanimously adopted his opinion, but in the lower ranks of the army a general cry arose against the traitors, who, they said, had betrayed the capital. The soldiers could not be persuaded that Paris had succumbed to natural causes, or the mere events of war, and the report of a great treason, which was vaguely spread, tended to increase their unwise distrust. They were persuaded that France and Napoleon had been victims to the blackest treason. The old soldiers, through indignation, and the new, through want of discipline, mutinied, saying, it was better to abandon standards dishonoured by treason. The imprudent expression, "No more conscriptions, no more *droits réunis*," uttered by the Count d'Artois, had echoed to the remotest provinces. "Let us come away, let us return home," was the language heard from the lips of all the soldiers. In fact, hundreds quitted their standards within a few hours. General Maison understood perfectly well, that whatever might be the government, an army would be always needed. He assembled his soldiers, who at first appeared to feel his energetic representations, but who soon began again to desert in numbers. He then assembled his officers and appealed to their patriotism. These yielded to his remonstrances, and in their turn appealing to the sub-officers and the veteran soldiers, succeeded in making an impression. In this way a nucleus of faithful men was formed, and with their aid General Maison, pointing his artillery at the principal gates of Lille, declared that he would pour a shower of grape on the first who attempted to desert. This vigorous demonstration awed the mutineers, and they returned to their duty. The Flemish army had lost about 2000 out of 12,000 men, but the remainder were staunch, and could be relied on.

General Maison's conduct on this occasion was called for by circumstances, for desertion was becoming contagious. Profiting of the anger of the veteran soldiers against those whom they called traitors, and endeavouring to increase in order to take advantage of it, the conscripts deserted in masses, saying they were no longer bound to the service, and in the end they enticed their veteran comrades, who began to feel longings after their native villages. In the great army that Napoleon had left at Fontainebleau, desertion had spread to a disastrous extent, and there was even danger that none but foreign soldiers might remain, which would be a deplorable condition in

which to treat for peace. Many of the immediate partisans of the Count d'Artois looked upon the dispersion of the imperial troops as a fortunate event; but the marshals pointed out the threatened danger of the extinction of a public force. Marmont, the principal author of this dispersion, wishing to make his zeal for the interests of the army serve as an excuse for his conduct, was one of the most active in representing the state of things to the government, and finally the Count d'Artois was induced to make a significant manifestation. He accordingly wrote a letter to General Maison, which was instantly published, thanking him for his noble conduct, and informing him that his services should be made known to Louis XVIII., and would be a claim on the esteem and confidence of his sovereign.

Whilst the Flemish army thus rallied round the new government, Carnot, whatever his dislike to the Bourbons, could not act otherwise than as a good citizen. He felt that he must submit to the law of necessity, and accept the Bourbons, as their government was the sole remaining alternative. But the Bourbons being accepted and recognised, there still remained duties towards France, and though the gates of Antwerp had been opened to the envoys of the ancient dynasty, that was no reason that the place should be delivered to the enemy. Bernadotte had informed Carnot of the events that had taken place at Paris, and endeavoured to induce him to give up Antwerp to the allies; but Carnot replied that the circumstances had not yet been sufficiently proved to induce the faithful commander of a besieged city to regard them as certain, and that, moreover, supposing them true, he would surrender the keys of the fortress confided to him only to the envoys of the King of France. Some days having elapsed, and all doubt having disappeared, Carnot informed the garrison of what had passed, made them assume the white cockade, and kept his gates still closed, waiting the orders of Louis XVIII.

Whilst the French generals established on the Schelde and Rhine pursued a line of conduct alike prudent and patriotic, an illustrious warrior distinguished himself in Westphalia by persevering firmness in his endeavours to preserve intact the trust confided to him. We have not forgotten how Marshal Davout was besieged in Hamburg at the head of the *corps d'armée* that he commanded. Commissioned to subdue the rebellious provinces in the north of Germany, and to defend the line of the Elbe, he had not put into execution against anybody the severities prescribed by Napoleon, but had contented himself with converting these penalties into *contributions de guerre*, and had sent to the main army lying before Dresden supplies in provisions and money which had sufficed for its maintenance, and after the disastrous battle of Leipsic, not finding himself

joined either by the garrison of Dresden or by any other, he had taken up his position in Hamburg, determined to defend himself there against all the armies of Europe, and to save this important position, which would be a valuable object of compensation in the future negotiations of peace, an important bond with Denmark, and the depôt of an immense war material collected by France.

Shut up in Hamburg from the month of September 1813, and from the month of November cut off from all communication with France, Marshal Davout had remained immovable, determined to hold out as long as he should have soldiers, ammunition, and provisions. Towards the end of November a communication, scarcely official, being couched partly in ordinary letters, and partly in cipher, commanded him to go to the assistance of Holland if he could; if not, to remain at Hamburg, to protect that place, and engage the enemy as much as possible. All the roads leading to Holland and France being intercepted, he adopted the latter alternative.

The marshal had under his command nearly 40,000 men, who had become under his instructions excellent soldiers, but of this number 7000 or 8000 were incapacitated by sickness. He had laid in large supplies of provisions and ammunition, and had by Napoleon's command drawn round Hamburg, Harburg, and the islands of the Elbe, a vast line of defence, consisting of earthworks, palisades, and hastily repaired bastions; thus defended, less than 100,000 men, aided by skilful engineers, could not have dislodged him. Never shrinking from danger when it appeared, but never going to seek it, he had deferred until the place should be invested the destruction of any buildings that might interfere with the defence. He warned the inhabitants of the terrible struggle that was approaching, advised them to lay in provisions, and declared to them that every person unprovided with the means of subsistence should be remorselessly expelled from Hamburg. The enemy having at length appeared, he got the houses that were condemned to be pulled down valued, and out of 80,000 inhabitants, expelled 20,000, who had not laid in provisions. It is true that the poor people thus expelled need only pass the gates, when they would find themselves in Altona, a neutral city, belonging to the Danes, but half Hamburgian, where they would be sure of abundant assistance. The marshal then commenced defensive operations, and in various combats killed between 7000 and 8000 of Benningsen's soldiers—a circumstance that put a period to these attacks. He passed the entire winter of 1813–14 in this manner, receiving no direct intelligence from the French government, but many reports through the enemy, some false, others true and depressing; but Marshal Davout, regardless alike of both, determined to

persevere in his resistance until all the armies of Europe should advance to overwhelm him.

Always severe, but upright and honest, he was determined to pay for the provisions he took, for the works he commanded, and the property he was compelled to destroy; the expenses thus incurred he defrayed from the *contributions de guerre*, to which Hamburg had been condemned for the rebellion of 1813. Being at the head of an active force, he might, like so many other commanders of besieged places, have refused to make compensation for the injury he caused in seizing provisions, pulling down houses, or raising levies of men. A few individuals would, under such circumstances, be obliged to support all the evils attendant on war. But it was repugnant to Marshal Davout's principles to lay upon some the burden that ought to be borne by all, and a fine having been levied the preceding year, he thought it more just to employ this money in indemnifying those whose property and services he employed for the public benefit. The Hamburgers had refused, since the French reverses, to pay the imposed fine, and Marshal Davout now assembled the merchants, and informed them that he wanted funds to pay the services he required from the inhabitants, and if they did not furnish what he required, he would seize the specie in the bank, upon which the bills for the payment of the *contribution de guerre* had been drawn. This declaration not having produced the desired effect, he kept his word, took the specie out of the bank, and employed in the public service the thirteen millions of which he thus obtained possession, without converting a single centime to an obscure or equivocal use. He continued to hold his position with indomitable tenacity amidst the bullets of the enemy and the calumnies of the Hamburgers, who were loud in their vociferations against what they called the crimes of the French, forgetting the acts of the English in Portugal, where they burned the harvests, the trees, the houses, and forced the Portuguese under pain of death to burn them themselves.

In this formidable position of affairs, Marshal Davout, attacked by the Russian and German armies, held out eight entire months, without receiving either commands from his sovereign or intelligence of his country. About the commencement of April, General Benningsen communicated to him, through the instrumentality of the Danes, what had occurred at Paris, and summoned him to open the gates. The marshal replied by quoting the decree relative to besieged places which forbids belief in reports circulated by the enemy, and added, that his sovereign might have experienced reverses, but that reverses did not absolve a man of honour from his duty. General Benningsen then commanded a fresh attack, which was executed in the name

of the Bourbons, and under the white flag. The marshal fired on the white as on the Russian standard, and repulsed the assailants after having experienced considerable loss. General Benningsen, thus defeated, had again recourse to negotiations, still through the instrumentality of the Danes, our ancient allies. The marshal did not refuse to listen, and offered to send General Delcambre to France to learn authentic intelligence, promising to look on these accounts as true, and act accordingly, if they proceeded from a French source. General Benningsen consented to this arrangement, on condition that one of the principal fortifications of Hamburg should be delivered to him. This the marshal refused. At length an envoy, a member of his own family, having arrived, bearing official communications from the provisional government, he, on the 28th April, assembled his army, which still amounted to 30,000 men, well armed, well dressed, and loyally disposed, and announced to them the restoration of the Bourbons. He made them assume the white cockade, and declared, amidst universal applause, that he would never yield the fortress until he should receive an order from Louis XVIII. Marshal Davout by this memorable defence preserved for our negotiators a valuable object of compensation, saved for France 30,000 men, an immense war matériel, and the honour of the national standard. Calumnies circulated by interested persons through Europe, and especially through France, cannot dim the lustre of such services. Under any circumstances, it is the duty of the historian to record such events with impartial justice.

In Italy, Prince Eugène had valiantly opposed Marshal Bellegarde, and perseveringly refused propositions made by the allies through the King of Bavaria, his father-in-law. Napoleon, as we have seen, after having ordered him to bring back the army to France—an order which, had it been executed in time, might have changed the fate of the war—had unfortunately, after the successes of Montmirail, Champaubert, and Montereau, commanded him to remain in Italy, where the prince successfully maintained his position, until Murat attacked him in the rear. He then despatched the Maucune division to oppose the Neapolitans at the passage of the Po. The brave Maucune had, in fact, routed them whenever they appeared, either alone or supported by the Austrians, and still continued to keep them in check, when positive intelligence of the occurrences at Paris reached Milan. Prince Eugène immediately consented to negotiate with Marshal Bellegarde, and on the 16th of April signed an armistice on the following bases. The French troops scattered through Italy were to return to France with the honours of war, bringing away their matériel. The Italian army under Prince Eugène was to remain on the Po, and

continue to guard the fortresses until the allied powers should have decided the fate of Italy.

The armistice being signed, the noble-minded prince, who, owing to the extraordinary events of the times, had become a foreign prince without ceasing to be a French soldier, took a touching leave of the army from which he was about to be separated for ever, and received in return the most expressive testimonies of affection and regret. The French army then advanced towards the Alps under the orders of General Grenier, and were joined on the way by the garrisons that were evacuating the Italian fortresses; they experienced a patriotic sadness in leaving this country, where they had shed so much blood, acquired so much glory, and made so short-lived an impression.

At Genoa some thousand conscripts under the orders of General Frezia had disputed the possession of the place with the English, and the Genoese themselves had foolishly hoped to recover their independence by rising against us. Obliged to yield, they, too, abandoned Italy, retreating along the foot of the Maritime Alps. In Dauphiné, Marshal Augereau, who had not been able to defend either Franche-Comté or Lyons, nor his own dignity, had fallen back on the Isere; whilst General Marchand, after having made a much better defence at Geneva and Chambery, had retired to Grenoble. Intelligence of the capitulation of Paris, which had quickly reached this part of France, had caused a cessation of hostilities in virtue of a local armistice. But it was very different at the foot of the Pyrenees, on account of the distance and the forces engaged, and even after the roar of cannon had ceased elsewhere, a sanguinary battle marked in this region the last days of the war.

Marshal Suchet, as we have seen, had deprived himself of the best part of his army for the benefit of Augereau, who had not profited of the advantage. With an army reduced to a few thousand men, he took up a position before Figuères, endeavouring to recover his Catalonian garrisons in exchange for Ferdinand VII., whom he offered to give up. Not having been able to induce the Spaniards to listen to his propositions, he had in the end set Ferdinand at liberty, by the express order of Napoleon, and had been obliged to trust for the faithful execution of the treaty of Valençay to the rather unreliable word of the new King of Spain, and the generosity of the Spaniards, whose feelings towards us were those of intense hatred. The marshal afterwards returned to France, determined to join Marshal Soult, if circumstances afforded him time and means.

Marshal Soult, after the battle of Orthez—which, had he displayed a little more tenacity, might have been a victory—had retired to Toulouse, flattering himself that he could draw

Lord Wellington thither, and so cover Bordeaux by a simple manœuvre. But Lord Wellington had no intention of pursuing an adversary whom he was certain to overtake when he pleased. He therefore seized Bordeaux, opened that city to the Bourbons, and then set out in pursuit of Marshal Soult, returning for that purpose along the left bank of the Garonne.

The English general had 60,000 men, amongst whom were many Spaniards and Portuguese, animated by victory, and who, under the influence of example and success, were nearly as good as the English troops, though not resembling them in any particular. Marshal Soult's soldiers did not amount to more than 36,000, but all were tried men, and at this moment filled with truly patriotic ardour. Unfortunately the marshal, depressed by recent events, had no longer confidence either in himself or his fortunes; he had fallen back on Toulouse, where he had scientifically fortified the position.

It was important in every sense, both military and political, to keep this city, which, like Bordeaux and Marseilles, exercised great moral influence in the south. It is situate, with the exception of the St. Cyprien suburb, on the right bank of the Garonne; and in order to attack the city, the English general would have been obliged to cross before our eyes a deep and rapid river. Cautious in all his movements, with soldiers incompetent to make long marches, and burdened with an immense convoy of provisions, Lord Wellington would not have been able by the quickest manœuvres to elude the vigilance of an adversary determined to prevent his crossing the Garonne. But Marshal Soult, placing his entire confidence in the position he had chosen round Toulouse, did not think of disputing the passage of the river that separated him from the English general, and left him free to traverse the banks above and below Toulouse to seek a position for throwing a bridge across. Lord Wellington carried his researches beyond the confluence of the Ariége and the Garonne; he even entered Cinte-Gabelle, whether that he hoped to find at this height an easier passage, or that he hoped by threatening the communications of Marshal Soult with Marshal Suchet to induce the French to abandon their position. However this may be, Lord Wellington, thinking the risk too great at this distance, redescended the course of the Garonne, and resolved to cross below Toulouse, that is to say, at Granada.

On the 4th April, the day of Napoleon's first abdication, the English general succeeded, notwithstanding the rapidity of the current, in throwing a bridge of boats across near Granada, and transported to the right bank Marshal Beresford's corps. Scarcely had his corps crossed the Garonne, when a sudden and violent swelling of the river, common to the season of the

year, endangered and nearly carried away the bridge. Fifteen thousand English, constituting the best part of the enemy's army, were thus thrown into our power, and these once destroyed, the entire English army would have been exposed to ruin. The cavalry of General Soult—brother to the marshal—witnessed this happy accident; General Count d'Erlon was also aware of it, and both communicated to the general-in-chief this unexpected favour from fortune that had been so adverse during the past two years. The marshal, depressed by his reverses, and seeing safety only in the strongly defended position of Toulouse, dared not go in quest of the English, whom he could have overtaken in twenty-four hours, and precipitated into the Garonne. The English remained four days in this perilous position; but the waters having abated, Lord Wellington repaired the bridge, and transported all his forces to the right bank. On the 9th he appeared before Toulouse, and resolved to attack the French on the following day, taking care that his bridge of boats kept pace with his progress along the Garonne, so that he might be assured of a means of retreat in case of need.

The position taken up by Marshal Soult possessed great advantages. The Garonne, which in the beginning of its course descends perpendicularly from the Pyrenees, turns suddenly to the right on reaching Toulouse, and there making a bend, flows afterwards nearly parallel with the mountains to the sea. Though the enemy, having passed the Garonne, threatened the right much more than the left bank, Marshal Soult had naturally thought of defending Toulouse on both banks. On the left bank, that is to say, in the inner angle formed by the Garonne, and occupied by the suburb of St. Cyprien, he had thrown up earthworks and planted a strong range of palisades, both extremities of which reached the banks of the river. Behind this line of works the embattled wall of the suburb, flanked with towers, and bristling with artillery, formed a second and almost impregnable obstacle. And supposing that the St. Cyprien suburb were forced, the French need only cross the stone bridge which connected the suburb with the city, and then blowing up the bridge, the enemy would find themselves confined to the left bank, after having lost numbers of men in a fruitless attack. One efficient division would have been sufficient to defend us on this side and frustrate all the efforts of the British army.

It was not therefore probable that the principal attack would be made on the left bank, where there was only a suburb to conquer; it was much more likely that the attack would be made on the right bank, where the prey offered was the city itself. But the approach on this side was not easier than on the other. The great southern canal which surrounded Toulouse, joining the Garonne below the city, offered the first line of

defence, which might be warmly disputed, an additional means of prolonging the resistance being afforded by the wall of circumvallation. The banks of the canal had been carefully fortified; the bridges had been protected by works, and mined In this manner the entire north of Toulouse was defended by the canal. On the east and south the position was still stronger, because beyond the canal there was a line of heights reaching from Pujade to Calvinet, and everywhere bristling with redoubts and artillery. It was here that Marshal Soult placed the main body of his forces, and it was impossible that the enemy could think of attacking any part of the city until they should have driven the French army from the heights. The enemy would have been obliged to make a descent towards the south, leaving themselves exposed during this movement to an attack from the French, and crossing the canal that lay on the right and rear, attack the city by the St. Michel suburb. But the marshal had taken precautions in this direction, and protected this suburb with works and artillery.

Marshal Soult had established the Maransin division—a detachment of General Reille's corps—on the left bank, in the St. Cyprien suburb. It was sufficient, as we have seen, for the defence of this quarter. The main body of his army was drawn up on the right bank. The Darricau division, belonging to Drouet d'Erlon's corps, stationed behind the canal, at the Matabiau bridge, defended the north of the city. The Darmagnac division of the same corps occupied the interval between the canal and the heights. The Harispe and Villatte divisions of the Clausel corps occupied the heights also. Lastly, behind the heights, and as a reserve, the Taupin division, forming the remainder of General Reille's corps, was placed.

Lord Wellington resolved to commence operations on the morning of the 10th of April. He ordered General Hill, with the Murray, Stewart, and Morillo divisions, to attack the French on the left bank of the Garonne, in front of the St. Cyprien suburb; this was more than a sufficient force for an operation which could only be secondary to the main action. The remainder of the English army was transported to the right bank. General Picton, at the head of the Scotch division, was ordered to force the canal on the north of the city, whilst Alton's light division was to second this attack by one the Spaniards were to attempt against the heights of Pujade. Lastly, Marshal Beresford, with the Clinton and Cole divisions, was to skirt the foot of the heights, advancing from the north towards the south, and endeavour to carry the Calvinet position, and then advance in a southerly direction in front of the St. Michel suburb. He had under his command a considerable portion of the British cavalry.

On the morning of the 10th, General Hill, on the left bank, attacked the Maransin division, in front of the St. Cyprien suburb, but cautiously, as the decisive effort was not to be made on that side. He met a determined resistance, and perceived that it would be a serious matter to persevere in his attempt. On the right bank, the real theatre of the warfare, General Picton attacked the canal courageously. The brave Darricau, the veteran colonel of the 32nd, who had distinguished himself at Diernstein, at Hall, and lately in Spain, defended the banks of the canal with his division. Skilfully disposing his soldiers behind this line of defence, and animating them by his example, he repulsed all the efforts of the English during several hours, and covered the line of the canal with dead or wounded Scots. During this time General Freyre tried to carry, by the aid of his Spaniards, the heights of Pujade, which are connected with that portion of the canal defended by General Darricau. The Spaniards, received with a brisk fire of artillery and musketry, advanced boldly to the foot of the entrenchments. But arrived at this point, they were attacked on their left flank by General Harispe, and on their right flank by General Darmagnac; they were unable to hold their ground against this combined assault, and numbers were killed. They would have been completely destroyed but for Alton's light division, that hastened to their relief.

On the south the English had lost nearly 3000 men, and the fruit of their efforts was everywhere the same. They were repulsed both on the left and the right bank, along the canal, as well as before the heights of Pujade.

At this moment Marshal Beresford afforded the French general a happy opportunity of terminating the conflict by a decisive success. The marshal, advancing from the north to the south along the heights that covered the east of our position, operated in front of us a dangerous but necessary flank movement, for it was indispensably necessary that he should come down to the south side in order to approach Toulouse. The danger of this movement was so much the greater; for if at this moment the enemy had advanced upon him en masse, he would have been precipitated into the muddy bed of a little river called the Ers, which flows parallel to the heights. Fortune smiled upon us a second time within eight days, but this was her last favour. Generals Clausel, Harispe, and Taupin, assembling round the commander-in-chief, urged him to profit of the opportunity, and to pour the mass of his forces on the flank of the rash Beresford, who, feeling the danger of his position, was hurrying the accomplishment of his movement. Marshal Soult, remembering the faults already committed with regard to the English when the French quitted strong positions for the

purpose of attacking them, and fearing to commit a like error on this occasion, hesitated more than two hours, and only made up his mind to arrest Beresford's march when the troops of the latter no longer exposed their flank to his fire, but were marching abreast towards the Calvinet point, the extreme right of our position. The Taupin division, despatched too late, abandoned uselessly a village where they might have long defended themselves, and attacking the enemy with impetuosity, were received by the English with their accustomed vigour; they unfortunately lost their general at the most critical moment. The division was left some moments without a leader, and without orders, and the English profited of their embarrassment to seize the redoubts of Calvinet. The French endeavoured in vain to recover them. General Harispe was wounded severely; and Marshal Beresford then crossing the line of the heights on our extreme right, appeared before the south side of the city. The retreat was effected with some little disorder, which put Toulouse for a moment in danger. Fortunately a grenadier captain of the 118th, named Larouzière, assembling his company behind the *remblai* of the canal, surprised the English by a close fire, arrested their progress, and gave the Darmagnac division time to rally. The enemy could carry their attempt no further. Although along the rest of the line we had repulsed the enemy as valiantly as in the morning, the position being turned on the south was no longer tenable.

The entire French army ought now to have fallen back on the walls of Toulouse, determined to fight there to the last. It would have been difficult in this position to force the 32,000 men that Marshal Soult still commanded. But the situation was completely isolated, and such a movement would besides leave the city of Toulouse exposed to the most imminent danger. On the other hand, by falling back on Carcassonne, Marshal Soult was certain of being joined by Marshal Suchet, and both united would present to the prudent Wellington a mass of forces against which he would scarcely attempt anything. Marshal Soult, therefore, took the wise resolution of traversing Toulouse and falling back on Villefranche. He had killed or wounded about 5000 English, and had himself lost 3500 men. As usual, the Spanish army had been unfortunate, but heroic.

At length intelligence of the late events at Paris was received. The provisional government by a little more activity might have spared the lives of 8000 brave men, uselessly sacrificed for the solution of a question that had been solved elsewhere. It was only on the 8th April that the provisional government thought of sending an emissary to the two armies that were battling at the foot of the Pyrenees; and yet they

ought to have been the first objects of attention, as they were most likely to renew the sanguinary conflict. M. de Talleyrand had chosen for this mission M. de St. Simon, who had set out accompanied by an English officer, in order to secure a passage through the enemy's army. The escort of this officer, though it facilitated M. de St. Simon's passage through the English army, rendered him suspected in the eyes of the French, who fancied they saw traitors on every side. Delayed first at Orleans, next at Montauban by the French, and lastly, at Toulouse by the English, M. de St. Simon did not reach the camp of Marshal Soult until the 14th. The marshal had chosen an impregnable position at Villefranche; he there waited the arrival of troops from the Catalonian army, and flattered himself that he should be soon revenged of the English. The arrival of M. de St. Simon was therefore a cause of extreme vexation, for besides the disastrous intelligence of which he was bearer, he checked the marshal at the very moment when victory was not impossible. The presence of M. de St. Simon produced, moreover, an intense emotion among the troops, who were still more exasperated than the veterans of the other armies. Influenced by all these motives, Marshal Soult endeavoured to persuade himself that the accounts from Paris were not true. He even fancied that these communications might be a snare of the enemy, and was about to put M. de St. Simon under arrest. But the latter effected his escape, and repaired to Marshal Suchet's camp. This marshal immediately gave credence to M. de St. Simon, and showed himself disposed to obey the orders of the provisional government, but on condition of awaiting a definite confirmation of the received accounts. The confirmation soon arrived, and an armistice, exclusively local, such as had been concluded in other places, suspended hostilities between the French marshals and the adverse forces that had invaded the Pyrenean frontier.

Whilst that in the most remote regions our armies still defended the empire, of whose fall they were ignorant, on our frontiers, and even at the gates of Paris, brave men fought for their country to the last gasp. Count Marmier, though he had never been a soldier, had enrolled and equipped at his own expense a legion of mobile national guards, and took up a position in Huningue, where he had heroically defended the place during five months. On his side the brave Daumesnil, so celebrated as "the wooden leg," had shut himself up in Vincennes, determined that the enemy should not get possession of the immense matériel lodged there. Threatened with the rigours of war, he replied by declaring he would blow the place up if his adversaries persisted in their threat; they consequently desisted. Like all the other commanders, he had

only yielded on receiving evidence of the revolution that had taken place at Paris and the regular government established there. So terminated the opposition that our soldiers, dispersed in so many different places, had not ceased to offer to combined Europe from Antwerp to Hamburg, from Hamburg to Milan, from Milan to Toulouse, and from Toulouse to Vincennes. Henceforth the new government, delivered from the presence of Napoleon, was also freed from the resistance of his lieutenants, all of whom were now ready to acknowledge the Bourbons.

But if the resistance of the armies had ceased, that of the passions was about to commence, and to this, prudence was the only efficacious force that could be opposed. Could this prudence be expected from the princes of the house of Bourbon and their friends, all returning to their country after twenty-five years of proscription and misfortune? Such was the important question that arose on the fall of the empire.

The Count d'Artois, established during two or three days in Paris—he had entered on the 12th April—was, so to speak, carried away by a whirl that would have disturbed a stronger head than his. Having taken up his abode in the Tuileries, he could scarcely contain his joy at finding himself in such a residence; he wished that the world at large should share in the satisfaction he felt, and endeavoured to persuade the partisans of the empire that nothing should be changed, whilst, on the contrary, he told the emigrants who returned with him after twenty-five years of suffering that they should have full satisfaction, provided they waited with patience. But he soon perceived that soft words were not sufficient to remove the difficulties of his position. He wanted aides-de-camp, and the choice required deliberation. The friends who had accompanied the prince from foreign lands, or those who, having remained in France, had been the first to greet him, expected that if high political posts had been given to those who served under the empire, they at least ought to fill the places immediately near the persons of the restored princes. But where could aides-de-camp be chosen but from amongst the military, and where were military men to be found but in the imperial armies? The question was a difficult one; and M. de Vitrolles, who understood the true state of things, advised the Count d'Artois to choose some of his aides-de-camp from among the distinguished officers of the empire. The prince followed this advice, and appointed MM. de Nansouty and de Lauriston, than whom none better could be selected, for they were respected in the army, and were connected with the ancient nobility. These appointments excited loud murmurs amongst the personal friends of the prince, brought many reproaches on M. de

Vitrolles, and were a complete revelation of the sentiments that animated the partisans of the ancient and modern régime towards each other in flocking round the Bourbons. The Count d'Artois, entirely engrossed by congratulations, visits, and interviews with the sovereigns, paid but little attention to this incident, and continued to testify his delight by lavishing pressures of the hand and promises. However, it was necessary to take into consideration an important affair, which mere pliancy of temper could not decide, and that was the title with which the prince should be invested in order to direct the government. The title of lieutenant-general of the kingdom, exercising the royal authority in absence of the king, seemed the most natural to adopt. But how could he dare to assume this title in presence of the Senate? at this moment the sole recognised authority, but who held themselves apart, since they had deposed Napoleon, not wishing to take part in any of the late proceedings, showing by their attitude, as well as by the language of several individual members, that they would neither invest the Count d'Artois nor the king himself with regal power without a solemn pledge to maintain the constitution. Scarcely could M. d'Artois or his friends be made to understand this difficulty, so natural did it appear to them that, at the bare presence of the legitimate sovereign, or his representative, every other authority ought to disappear; and so ignorant were they that, beside the royal power, any authority could exist emanating from the people, or responsible to them. M. de Vitrolles, who acted as the royalist intermediary with the provisional government, being informed of the difficulty, knowing that it ought not to be treated lightly, laid the case before the prince, who confided to him the care of solving the question as best he could, by coming to terms with those to whom the more serious State affairs were entrusted.

Although the people at large still continued to ridicule the Senate, they nevertheless looked upon that body as the only existing authority; and had they supposed that the Bourbons, in order to return to France as absolute princes, refused to receive the investiture of their authority from the senators, the nation would have risen in favour of the latter; the army would have followed the example; and the allied sovereigns would have joined the public and the army, bound as they were by their plighted word, by the dictates of good sense, and by conscientious conviction; the Emperor Alexander, in particular, warmly approved the determination of recalling the ancient dynasty only on condition of supporting a liberal constitution. It would, therefore, have been folly to dispute the authority of the Senate; but the senators, on the other hand, were considerably embarrassed; public opinion, once

convinced of the propriety and necessity of recalling the Bourbons, had turned in their favour with a kind of enthusiasm. This excitement, the offspring of reason and natural sensibility amongst the masses, and the result of ambition and sometimes of meanness of character in individuals, continued to increase. The personal qualities of the Count d'Artois contributed very much to this feeling, and the Senate ran the risk of being deserted in a few days. It was therefore prudent in both parties to effect a compromise. But as usual, before attempting to negotiate, each asserted extreme opinions; and it was not M. de Talleyrand who was likely to effect a reconciliation so necessary to both parties, for he habitually, partly through indolence, and partly because he was tired of discussion, shunned disputation. He allowed them to go on disputing, quietly waiting the moment when, both parties being worn out, the difficulty should be solved in some way.

There was a personage whose arrival at Paris we have already mentioned—the Duke d'Otranto—who sought rather than shunned trouble; who was fond of commotion and intrigue; who wished to put himself forward, and bitterly regretted having by his absence lost the opportunity of being the principal actor in the late changes. Since his return he had given evidence of his presence by exclaiming against the treaty of the 11th April; and he beheld with intense joy, in the question now agitated, a stage ready prepared, where his turbulent and daring activity might be exhibited. It was his opinion that the Senate ought to endeavour to bind the Bourbons; and being a regicide, this was a precaution more needful to him than to others; but he perceived the embarrassment of the Senate and wished to extricate them, and at the same time do the Bourbons a service which would give him a claim to their favour in future. He was, besides, better suited than M. de Talleyrand to surmount the present difficulty, because he was more fertile in expedients, because he feared less to take a prominent part, and besides, he was better suited to carry on intrigues with the senators. Intruding himself everywhere, he had become as conversant in the affairs of the provisional government as one of the members; and M. de Talleyrand, wishing to humour that he might afterwards make use of him, had offered no opposition.

The provisional government had transferred its sittings from the Rue St. Florentin to the Tuileries after the Count d'Artois had taken up his abode there, but their doors were not more firmly closed than before; they were still open to busybodies, who came to intermeddle or to obtrude their advice, nor were they closed against mere loungers. The provisional government was at this moment busy discussing, with a select number of

senators, the important question of the day—the title to be conferred on the Count d'Artois; and M. de Vitrolles, on the prince's part, asserted the rights of legitimate royalty; when M. Fouché, with a mixture of vulgarity, effrontery, and good sense, rising suddenly, gave M. de Vitrolles clearly to understand that he did not comprehend the question under discussion; that it was necessary that the Count d'Artois should receive the title of lieutenant-general, but that he should receive it from the Senate, who would confer the title on the prince when he would be willing to pledge himself to support the senatorial constitution. M. de Vitrolles objected the want of powers on the part of the prince, who had not time to receive authority sanctioning his acceptance of the constitution. M. Fouché treated this objection lightly. He said that the difficulty that embarrassed M. de Vitrolles was not of a serious character, that of course the Count d'Artois knew the feelings and opinions of his brother Louis XVIII., that he might therefore become surety for him, and declare that, aware of his intentions, he was certain that the king would accept the constitution, if not in all its details, at least in its principal bases. M. Fouché did not stop there; he instantly sketched a document, leaving it optional to modify the terms more or less, but which embodied a positive moral pledge with regard to the constitution, without removing the difficulty of the want of the royal sanction. According to this plan, the Senate should repair to the Tuileries, where the Count d'Artois would read the prepared declaration, and this being done, the Senate should invest the prince with the lieutenant-generalship. "But," said M. de Vitrolles, "who can assure us that the Senate will accept this arrangement?" "I can," replied M. Fouché, with his usual effrontery. M. de Vitrolles, who had never seen M. Fouché before, seemed to ask all present by his looks who the person was with whom he was discussing, and who answered so confidently for himself and others. Having learned the name, he ceased to be surprised at the presumption of his interlocutor, and felt no doubt of the promised result, without appearing alarmed at the idea of his prince being laid under obligations by a regicide. The proposed expedient was agreed on, and each departed to prepare the minds of the parties interested. M. de Talleyrand allowed M. Fouché to do as he pleased, like all indolent persons who allow themselves to be deprived of their privileges by the active-minded.

M. de Vitrolles having returned to the Count d'Artois, communicated to him and his friends the arrangement devised by M. Fouché. The prince was not then the person most annoyed. Intoxicated by success and the applause with which he was everywhere greeted, he was inclined to look upon the proposed difficulties as unimportant subtilties that time would dissipate,

and he was ready to consent to everything, provided that the title of lieutenant-general was immediately conferred on him. But his friends, whose prejudices were less dissipated by personal flattery, were disgusted at not seeing the legitimate authority acknowledged, and as it were adored the moment it became visible, but on the contrary they saw it cheapened by a power that arrogated a superior authority, under pretext of representing the nation. These pretensions of the Senate irritated the royalists, and they were determined to put them down at any price. As they had triumphed in the case of the tricolor cockades, they flattered themselves that they should triumph as easily over what they called *revolutionary principles.* M. de Vitrolles after having poured his grievances into the sympathising hearts of his friends, did not, however, wish to urge them to acts of imprudence, of whose folly he was conscious, and he saw clearly that it would be necessary to come to some conclusion. But what was to be done under the circumstances? It was impossible to remain at Paris without legal authority; to assume it in presence of the Senate and in spite of that body was equally impossible, unless that the Senate could be annihilated by its dissolution being pronounced, and the chamber where the senators held their sittings closed. But how could such a resolve be put into execution? There were not more than eight or ten of these ultra-royalists in Paris; they did not know any person, not an official of the administration to whom they could give an order. They had no organised force at their command; for Marmont's soldiers, who alone had abandoned Napoleon, belonged to the provisional government; the national guard had assumed the white cockade with visible repugnance; and the soldiers of the allies were at the disposal of the too liberal-minded Alexander. To attempt in this destitute state to upset the Senate and the provisional government would have been an act of madness; the projectors would expose themselves to a prodigious amount of ridicule, and probably to a disavowal of their acts by Louis XVIII.; perhaps even that public opinion might suddenly change in favour of the regency of Marie Louise, if this counter-revolutionary attempt assumed a serious aspect.

The Count d'Artois, disposed to take everything in good part, said that he could not without orders from his brother, indeed without his formal approval, expose to perilous chances the cause of royalty, that had just so miraculously triumphed. He thought it better to accept the investiture from the hands of the Senate on the best terms that could be obtained, take possession of the royal authority as soon as possible, and exercise it to the best of his judgment until the arrival of Louis XVIII., who, once seated on his throne, could do as he thought fit. The Count d'Artois' self-created advisers, seeing him inclined

to submit, dared not offer further resistance; they therefore adopted the part of submission, modifying at the same time the declaration suggested by M. Fouché, making the pledges taken by the prince as light as possible, and mentioning only the principal bases of the future constitution. This task being finished, M. de Vitrolles returned to M. Fouché, who showed little concern about the changes of form provided the principles remained. He went immediately to prepare the Senate for the proposed arrangement.

Whilst the ultra-royalists were thus employed, the Emperor Alexander having learned the difficulties opposed by the Count d'Artois' advisers to the conditions of the Senate, commissioned M. de Nesselrode to visit M. de Vitrolles, and communicate to him the intentions of the allied sovereigns. On the morning of the 14th, while the Senate was preparing to assemble, M. de Nesselrode had a clear and conclusive conversation with M. de Vitrolles. The Russian minister, whose language in general was simple and moderate, but decisive, declared to M. de Vitrolles, in the name of his master and the allied sovereigns, that it was the Senate who had done everything; that it was the Senate who had deposed Napoleon, and recalled the Bourbons; that but for the existence of this body, the allies would not have found a legitimate authority with whom to treat; and that reviled though the Senate may be, it contained the most enlightened and experienced men the country possessed; that it was not by the aid of emigrants, who did not understand either the state of France or Europe nor the spirit of the times, that so formidable a nation as France could be ruled; that it was therefore necessary to submit to the conditions offered by the Senate, which after all were not unreasonable. M. de Nesselrode added that there existed at this moment only two military forces—the army of Napoleon, and the two hundred thousand bayonets of the allied sovereigns; that Napoleon's army was in the interest of the King of Rome, and that the two hundred thousand bayonets of the allies should never serve to enact an 18th Brumaire against the Senate, but would rather be employed to prevent it; that this was a fixed resolution, which he was not commissioned to discuss, but to announce.

M. de Vitrolles again retired, indignant against the foreign influence which, however, he had himself gone to seek at Troyes, and laid before the prince the communications with which he was charged. There was a unanimous outcry against *that fool Alexander*, as the ultra-royalists called the Emperor of Russia, and they waited with a forced resignation the determination of the Senate.

This body assembled on the same day, and heard the propositions of M. Fouché, supported by all M. de Talleyrand's

influence. It was not by sound reasons, adduced in public sittings, that the Senate was influenced, but by words whispered in the ear of individual members by active and crafty agents. And amongst these none was more conspicuous than M. Fouché. He told the senators that it was absolutely necessary to get out of this difficulty, and invest the Count d'Artois with the lieutenant-generalship, still maintaining the conditions already stipulated, that is to say, the senatorial constitution and the oath of the king to maintain this constitution.

Influenced by the opinions of MM. Fouché and de Talleyrand, the Senate passed in full sitting the following resolution, which did honour to the firmness of the Senate, and gave no opportunity for ridicule.

"In conformity with the proposition of the provisional government, and the report of a special commission of seven members—

"The Senate resigns the provisional government of France to S. A. R. Mgr, the Count d'Artois, with the title of lieutenant-general of the kingdom, until Louis Stanislaus Xavier, called to the throne of the French, shall have accepted the constitutional charter.

"The Senate further declares that the resolution passed this day shall be presented in the evening to S. A. R. Mgr, the Count d'Artois, by the entire body of the Senate.

"Resolved at Paris, 14th April."

On his return to the Tuileries, M. de Talleyrand met M. de Vitrolles, and said, throwing carelessly on a table a copy of the resolutions adopted by the Senate, that the royalists must be satisfied with that, for the Senate would come in the evening to receive the declaration of the prince, and to read him their decree. M. de Vitrolles returning to the prince, found him now less accommodating than on the previous evening. The haughty precision of the terms in which the provisional and conditional power was conferred on him filled him with anger. He flung away the document offered to him, exclaiming that the gentlemen senators might do as they pleased; that he did not know them; that he would not receive them; and that he would be lieutenant-general of the kingdom in virtue of his own right, and not in virtue of their decree.

Thus the prince, who on the previous day had been more rational than his friends, was much less so now; each in turn had become intractable. But necessity, before which the friends of the Count d'Artois had bent, was equally powerful with him. The prince and his friends were not stronger on the 14th than they had been on the 13th April; they had no power over the army, for that obeyed Napoleon, nor over the national guard, which obeyed the Senate, nor over the foreign soldiers, who

were under the command of the Emperor Alexander. They had thought of making use of the legislative corps, a body more popular than the Senate, but possessed of less authority, and for this purpose had endeavoured to learn the sentiments of the most influential members of the legislative corps, but the replies were timid and disheartening. Besides, there were so few of the members then in Paris, that it would be impossible to assemble that body. In short, the day was advancing, the Senate would soon arrive, so that there was not time to get up an outcry. The declaration required of the prince was read over, the pledges demanded of him were made as light as possible, but allowing the fundamental principles to remain, and these principles were, the recall of the king on condition of giving guarantees, which have since received the title of the constitutional charter, that is to say, on condition of recognising the French Revolution in all its most legitimate and respectable phases.

The Senate arrived at eight in the evening at the Tuileries, and at their head the president, M. de Talleyrand.

This personage, so well calculated to figure in scenes where it was needed to temper firmness with the most refined politeness, approached the prince, and leaning as usual on a cane, with his head inclined to one side, read a discourse, at once haughty and adroit, in which he explained without excusing the conduct of the Senate, for it did not need excuse.

"The Senate," he said, "has promoted the return of your august house to the throne of France. Taught by the present and the past, the Senate desires, with the nation, to fix the royal authority for ever on the enduring basis of a just division of power and the security of public liberty—the only guarantees for the happiness and interest of all.

"The Senate, persuaded that the principles of the new constitution have penetrated your heart, confer on you, by the decree that I have the honour of presenting, the title of lieutenant-general of the kingdom until the arrival of the king, your august brother. Our respectful confidence cannot offer a higher testimony of regard to the spirit of chivalrous honour transmitted to you by your ancestors.

"My lord, the Senate, in these moments of public joy, being obliged in the discharge of its duties to preserve a greater calmness of manner, is not the less penetrated with the popular sentiments. Your royal highness can read the sentiments of our hearts, even through the reserve of our language."

M. de Talleyrand added to these firm and respectful words protestations of devotedness, then common in every mouth, but which in his case were the least commonplace and mean that could be selected.

The prince replied in the words already agreed on. "Gentlemen," he said, "I have read the constitutional act that recalls to the throne of France the king, my august brother. I have not received from him authority to accept the constitution, but I know his sentiments and his principles, and I do not apprehend a disavowal when I declare in his name that he will admit the bases of this act."

After this explicit engagement, the declaration enumerated the bases, that is to say, the division of power, the participation of the executive between the king and the chambers, the responsibility of ministers, the right of the nation to levy taxes, the liberty of the press, individual liberty, freedom of religious worship, permanency of judges, inviolability of the public debt and of the sales called "national," maintenance of the Legion of Honour, of ranks and pensions in the army, and an oblivion for the votes and acts anterior to, &c., &c.

"I hope," added the prince, "that the enumeration of these conditions will satisfy you, and that it comprises all the guarantees that can secure the liberty and tranquillity of France."

These remarks having produced an effect, the prince, emboldened by success, spoke in the most happily chosen phrases, first to the Senate collectively, then to different senators with whom he conversed familiarly. One of them could not help exclaiming, "Yes, it is indeed the blood of Henry IV. that flows in your veins." "His blood flows indeed in my veins," rejoined the prince; "I would wish to possess his talents, but in default of his talents, I possess his heart and his love for France."

These expressions excited warm approbation, and the Senate and the prince appeared to be two powers thoroughly reconciled. After the Senate came the members of the legislative corps, anxious to give in their adhesion to the act that was consummated before their eyes. The prince addressed them in words that indicated a certain preference, for he complimented them on having resisted tyranny, a compliment which he could not address to the Senate. This little piece of flattery, highly gratifying to the legislative corps, but scarcely perceived by the Senate, disappeared amid the general content.

The prince had achieved a complete success, and he was perfectly happy. The idea of appearing before a great body composed of the most important personages in France had inspired him with a certain amount of timidity. He was enchanted at having got so well out of the business, and with his usual volatility appeared to have forgotten his recent anger. "Upon my word," he said to his intimate friends, "the pledge is taken: we must abide by it honestly; and if

after some years things do not go on well, we shall see what can be done towards a new arrangement.*

From this moment the prince might consider himself as legally invested with the royal authority, and he had passed triumphantly through one of the most trying phases of his position. But he now suddenly remembered that during the last fortnight, carried away by the whirl of events, he had always acted according to his own opinions, or the advice of his friends, without thinking of Louis XVIII. He certainly was not guilty of negligence or usurpation, for he had not had one hour free to devote to obedience to the king, and in every circumstance he had only yielded to necessity. But he feared his brother, who was witty, jealous, and sarcastic. Perceiving that in all which he had done since the affair of Nancy he had not once thought of consulting his brother, who in his eyes was a king by divine right, he was terrified. "But my brother," he said; "we have not thought of him, we have not communicated to him anything we have done. What will he say?" M. de Vitrolles, rather surprised at this innocent and unfounded remorse, replied, that in the first place he had seized the crown, which was a signal service, for which Louis XVIII. must hold himself indebted; that besides, there had not been time to send intelligence to London, that the sincerity of his conduct was evident in all his acts, that at the utmost the time had only now arrived to send an envoy to London, and that Louis XVIII. would see clearly that this was the first moment the prince had had at his disposal. Somewhat recovered from his alarm, the Count d'Artois selected the Count de Bruges as his envoy to England, to explain to Louis XVIII. what had been done, to show him the reasons for this mode of acting, and to receive his royal orders concerning what was yet to be done, and commands for the preparations of his journey into France.

The Count d'Artois, being invested with royal authority, it was necessary to put a term to the existence of the provisional government, without however estranging the men who composed it, or losing the benefit of their influence. Setting aside all claims of gratitude, it would have been a great imprudence to break with them so soon and so abruptly. The means of satisfying every requirement was clearly pointed out—which was to resolve the provisional government into a council for the Count d'Artois, because this prince, even had he been better acquainted with men and things than he was, could not dispense with a council. The provisional government was therefore changed into a privy council, deliberating with the

* This is the account given by M. de Vitrolles, the devoted friend of the prince.

prince on all State affairs. The ministers, unexceptional in every respect, and some worthy of governing France during the brightest epochs of her history, became privy councillors, *en attendant* the return of Louis XVIII., who would confirm them in office.

Meanwhile, the council of the prince, composed exclusively of the provisional government, was defective in more than one respect. There was no representative of the army, for the hoary Beurnonville could not be looked upon as such; formerly, indeed, a good officer, he had since fallen into such complete oblivion that the glorious phalanxes that had traversed Europe during twenty years could not think themselves represented by him. Two persons were at first thought of—Marshal Suchet, because of his talents as a warrior and statesman, and Marshal Marmont, because of the signal service he had rendered to the royal cause. But M. de Talleyrand did not wish to be associated with a person so influential as Marshal Suchet, and nobody had either the courage or inclination to enter into close relationship with Marshal Marmont. This unfortunate man, who had hoped to secure to himself the first rank by transferring his services to the provisional government, had become odious to his ancient comrades, and insupportable to his new friends. Military men, ascribing more influence to the defection of the 6th corps than it really had had on the result of the war, took pleasure in thinking, and still more in saying, that treason alone had conquered them, and at the moment when they abandoned Napoleon for the Bourbons, they took especial care to establish a decided distinction between *betraying* and *giving in adhesion.* Thus the more they yielded, the more severe were they on Marmont, who was become the traitor *par excellence.*

This unhappy man, perceiving the abyss into which he had fallen without anticipating it, exclaimed against the injustice of fate. The more he suffered internally, the more he exerted himself externally, going hither and thither sometimes for the purpose of acquiring additional importance, sometimes to render to the army services for which he was thanked by the military; and it was this that had inspired him with so much ardour in defending the tricolor cockade, and instituting measures against desertion. But without succeeding in clearing himself in the eyes of his ancient comrades, he had rendered himself singularly disagreeable to those he had served by the commotion he excited, by the excessive pretensions he put forth, and by the reproach of ingratitude always ready on his lips when what he wished was not done. His vanity, his fickleness, his very courage, added to the disagreeableness of his presence, and he was become a heavy burden to those whose triumph he had secured;

a terrible example to those who during political revolutions are tempted to deviate from the line of plain and obvious duty arising naturally from their position. To elect him member of the supreme council was really impossible, and it was only suggested in order that it might be said that it was impracticable. Marshals Moncey and Oudinot were selected; honest men, who had been amongst the first to give in their adhesion, but who were incompetent to exercise a political influence. These new colleagues suited M. de Talleyrand, for they could not excite his suspicions. Another of different stamp was elected—General Dessoles—who did not put forth any great pretensions. It was long known that the head of Moreau's staff was a distinguished man. This opinion was changed into conviction on the part of those who passed a few days in his society. He gave evidence of a refined, cultivated, and enlarged mind, an upright character, and an adherence to the honest convictions of the times, that is to say, a sincere belief that henceforth peace and legitimate liberty could be found only under the Bourbons. Moreover, General Dessoles had been able in a few days to win the good opinion of the national guards, who, drawn from the middle classes of Paris, holding rational and temperate opinions, would become for the new government a powerful support between the imperial army, already a prey to regret, and the allied army, that was under foreign control. General Dessoles was therefore, as representative of the national guard, and on his own account, appointed a member of the royal council.

There was a personage who, after having served as intermediary between the ruling powers of the day, and even incurred actual dangers for the royal cause, had no idea of being set aside as a henceforth useless instrument—this personage was M. de Vitrolles. Having become the special agent, and almost the personal friend of the Count d'Artois, he hoped to play under the Bourbons the same part that M. de Bassano had played under the empire. This was a strange mistake, for the part of M. de Bassano, which was only to receive the wishes of an absolute master and transmit them to clerk ministers, ceased with Napoleon's reign. Nevertheless, M. de Vitrolles assumed spontaneously the functions of secretary to the royal council, took notes of the proceedings, which displeased M. de Talleyrand very much, for he wisely believed that it is the definite resolutions of a privy council that ought to be recorded, and not the thousand fugitive and often contradictory opinions which even men of the strongest intellect put forth before arriving at definite resolutions. M. de Vitrolles undertook the office of recording the deliberations of the royal council, though he was often recommended not certainly to withdraw, but to abstain from writing.

Still all the claimants for office that hovered round the new government were not satisfied. There was the Abbé de Pradt, who imagined that he was as useful as he was petulant, and of whom nobody would have thought of making a minister, nor wished to make a colleague, and who on this account was placed in dignified isolation by being appointed grand chancellor of the Legion of Honour. And there was another person, who had long been intimate with Napoleon, who had been his school-fellow, and who, having lost his confidence some years before, repaid by a rabid hatred the disgrace he had incurred: this was M. de Bourrienne, who had on the first change of government been appointed to the office of postmaster-general. He was allowed to keep the appointment, because he had it, and there would have been a difficulty in finding him another. Amongst all these appointments, very few were bestowed on the emigrants, who, having returned to France either at a late or more remote period, regarded the reign of the Bourbons, not only as a triumph achieved by them, but as their patrimony. Some had already returned from England or the provinces, and thronged round the Count d'Artois, who, not being able to give them places in the government of the country, formed them into a private government, and made of them, so to speak, his personal *clientèle*. We have mentioned MM. de Montceil and de la Maisonfort, who had returned, the one from Franche-Comté, the other from England, men of talent and learning, who must not be confounded with the herd that seek to turn every revolution to their personal advantage. The Count d'Artois installed them at the Tuileries, for the purpose of having near him a kind of secret council that should possess his entire confidence. Had the Count d'Artois admitted only such men to his confidence—though antagonistic influences are always dangerous in a government—the quality of the choice might have partly corrected the evil. But whilst his brother Louis XVIII., through prudence, idleness, or contempt, had uniformly kept at a distance those royalists who came from Vendée or Paris to England, bringing groundless information and raising false hopes, the Count d'Artois, who was of a restless disposition and compliant temper, was always surrounded by these men, and he was now beset by them as constantly as circumstances permitted. In fact, the Tuileries were now filled with men who reminded the prince that they had done this or that, that they had been charged with such or such mission, which, according to their account, had been most difficult of execution, and they now offered to perform services of any kind whatsoever. Some proposed to go into the departments and depose the refractory prefects or sub-prefects of the empire, or to pursue the members of the Bonaparte family and tear

from them the riches which it was said they had carried off. Others went so far as to volunteer to rid France of the tyrant, who, though dethroned, would never allow France to enjoy peace if he were allowed to live. The Count d'Artois, not listening attentively, above all, not examining minutely these propositions, gave a gracious reception to all these busybodies, shook hands with all, did not question any of their pretended services, did not say to any one that he did not remember to have seen him before; he received the offers of all, and in return lavished on them promises with a warmth of manner and words the result alike of his amiability and frivolity. His only care was to send everybody away content, and he treated exactly in the same manner those high-minded royalists who, faithful to their principles, had never stained their honour by a single misdeed, and men who during the civil war had covered themselves with crime. To all, without exception, he said that they must have patience, that each should receive the recompense due to his services, provided he would only wait; that for the present, the government had been obliged to give places to *Bonaparte's people*, who had certainly rendered services that deserved to be rewarded, but that the turn of the pure royalists would come, and that they should not have in vain suffered, loved, and waited during five and twenty years.

Incapable of knowingly doing what was wrong, but very capable of allowing it to be done, the Count d'Artois had become almost immediately on his arrival in Paris the centre of two governments—the one regularly appointed, composed of the ancient functionaries of the empire, who had invested him with the authority he held; the other irregular, and what might be called clandestine, had not its existence been generally known, composed of royalists, that had been oppressed during the Revolution, and their existence ignored under the empire, some of whom had passed with unblemished reputation through the ordeal of the civil war, and others stained with all the vices engendered by that period. The Count d'Artois passed from one party to the other, presenting a fair face to each, thinking to conciliate both, and thus strengthen his cause; a double part, in the effort to sustain which the strongest-minded and wisest man might have failed.

Meanwhile, the state of France was deplorable, and called loudly for a remedy. Desolation and terror reigned in Franche-Comté, Alsace, Lorraine, Champagne, Burgundy, and Flanders. The allied troops, particularly the Prussians, committed atrocities of which the French armies, though they had often committed deplorable excesses in conquered countries, had never rendered themselves guilty, at least in the same degree. The allied sovereigns, resident in Paris, commanded in all sincerity

the observance of discipline and humanity; but the officers, believing that they might disobey these orders, or that, at least, their disobedience would remain unknown or unpunished, neither abstained from any excess themselves, nor imposed any restraint on their soldiers. They seized everything of which they had need, and allowed still more to be destroyed. In Champagne especially, where the fury of war had been greatest, the villages were reduced to ashes, the inhabitants had taken flight, traffic had ceased, the bridges were cut down, the roads broken up, and the air rendered infectious by exhalations arising from the unburied dead. The enraged peasantry murdered without pity the foreign soldiers that fell into their power. The imperial functionaries had been replaced by persons who had volunteered their services, or who had been found in the locality, and who were employed to levy on the country whatever the enemy needed, a species of extortion preferable, however, to pillage. To this disheartening spectacle was added another of a nature to excite intense uneasiness. The French armies, especially those that had seen most service, were in close proximity to the allied armies. Their first emotion was one of satisfaction at seeing a horribly destructive war terminated, but this feeling soon gave place to regret, and this regret was quickly converted into anger against the *traitors*, to whom they imputed the disasters that had befallen our arms. In the excitement of their feelings they were ready to fall again upon the enemy, an event that might have occurred but for desertion, which had become, as we have said, a general contagion. Consequently, the highways were covered with soldiers deserting in troops, with arms, baggage, and horses, so that France was threatened with one of two misfortunes, either to be deprived of soldiers, or to retain those who were too faithful and ready spontaneously to recommence the war.

In the provinces to which the invaders had not penetrated, the authorities, anxious, restless, and uneasy, fearing alike to abandon Napoleon too soon, or to join the Bourbons too late, held an equivocal line of conduct, and were not competent to restrain the excited inhabitants. In the midland departments, generally so peaceable, these inconveniences were not strongly felt, the worst disposition manifested being the public ridicule with which the vacillating conduct of the magistracy was assailed. But in Vendée, in the south, and in every place where the royalists and revolutionists found themselves in juxtaposition, the weakness of the authorities became a positive danger. At length, taxation became as obnoxious as conscription. Following the example of the Count d'Artois, the Dukes of Angoulême and Berry had appeared, the one in

Gascony, the other in Normandy, amid cries of "Down with the conscription, down with the *droits réunis.*"

The people were desirous that the second of these promises should be instantly realised, and from Marseilles to Bordeaux all refused to pay the indirect taxes. To complete this sad picture, it must be added that the English, faithful to their habit of introducing their merchandise in the rear of their armies, had crowded the seaports on the coast of the English channel, of the Atlantic, and the Mediterranean, with sugars, coffees, cotton goods, and iron, offered at extremely low prices, which threatened to ruin our merchants and manufacturers, for the former had in their warehouses only colonial goods that had paid a duty of fifty per cent., and the others could only offer for sale goods manufactured from a high-priced raw material. It was therefore possible that a commercial catastrophe might be added to all the calamities of a frightful war.

Lastly, there was only one disposable million of francs in the treasury. In the invaded provinces, the public money had been carried off by the enemy, and in the provinces where the foreign troops had not penetrated the taxes had ceased to be collected.

When we regard attentively the difficulties with which a government just emerged from a revolution is beset, we are impressed with a feeling of alarm, for it seems impossible that such a government can be firmly established without the aid of prodigious genius. But genius is never necessary in the commencement of such a work, because a kind of general goodwill seconds governments in their beginnings, and it is only according to the wisdom they display later, when the moments of greatest difficulty seem to be passed, that we should judge them.

Commissioners-extraordinary were sent into the provinces for the purpose of making known what were at that time called the *acts of the Senate;* they were to procure the public acceptance of these acts, and get them put into execution; they were to set at liberty the priests or royalists who were detained in prison, to put an end to the vexations caused by conscription, to examine carefully the local authorities, the prefects, sub-prefects, and mayors, to demand their adhesion to the Bourbon cause, and in case of refusal to deprive them of their official rank. The motive in selecting these commissioners was most conciliatory, and they received the most prudent instructions. They were chosen from amongst *Bonaparte's people*—it is so these men were called who had studied in Napoleon's school, and who had had the worldly wisdom to abandon him before committing themselves—and the grand seigneurs of the ancient nobility, men who were moderate-

minded and benevolent, as people generally are in the first flush of triumph.

In a selection so diversified, we find Marshal Kellermann, who was sent to the 3rd military division (Metz); the Count Dejean to the 11th (Bordeaux); the Duke de Plaisance, nephew to the treasurer Lebrun, to the 14th (Caen); M. Otto, an ancient diplomatist, to the 21st (Bourges); General Marescot, companion of the unfortunate General Dupont, to the 20th (Perigneux); Count Jules de Polignac to the 10th (Toulouse); Count Roger de Damas to the 4th (Nancy); Count Auguste de Juigné, nephew of the former Archbishop of Paris, to the 7th (Grenoble); Count Bruno de Boisgelin to the 8th (Toulon); Chevalier de la Salle, son of the former governor of Alsace, to the 5th (Strasburg); the Count Alexis de Noailles to the 19th (Lyon), &c.

These persons, whose antecedents were so opposite, set off immediately to announce in the departments the good news of the return of the Bourbons, the approaching peace, and the recognition of constitutional liberty; they were to use every effort to enlist the sympathies of the people in these changes.

One of the first acts of the government was to disperse in different localities the army that Napoleon had concentrated round Fontainebleau, and to change the commanders of whom doubts were entertained. The imperial guards, that by being concentrated had become so formidable, were dispersed through those departments least likely to be influenced by their spirit. The old guard was allowed to remain at Fontainebleau, but the young guard was sent to Orleans. The cavalry of the guard was quartered at Bourges, Saumur, and Angers; the artillery at Vendôme. The 6th corps, which, under the influence of Marmont and his generals of division, had separated from the imperial cause, was stationed at Rouen and in the environs. The 7th corps, that of Oudinot, chiefly composed of the troops brought from Spain, was sent off to Evreux, with the Count de Valmy's cavalry. The 11th, or Macdonald's corps, was sent with Milhaud's cavalry to Chartres. The 2nd corps, commanded by General Gerard, was sent to Nevers, with the St. Germain cavalry. Those that remained of the Poles were assembled at St. Denis, to be placed at the disposal of the Emperor of Russia. In like manner the Croats were assembled at Dijon, to be delivered to the Prince de Schwarzenberg; and the Belgians were brought to St. Germain, to be given up to the Prince of Orange. Quartered in this manner, there was no further cause to fear collisions between the French and foreign troops. General Maison, who had distinguished himself in the Belgian campaign, where he had maintained the strictest discipline, was left at the head of the troops in Flanders.

Marshal Davout was reputed an obstinate partisan of the empire. His resistance at Hamburg had exasperated the allied sovereigns; his name made all the enemies of France in Germany tremble; he had not hesitated to fire upon the white flag when it appeared beside the Russian; and these were acts which, without involving the imputation of intolerance, rendered him unacceptable to the government. General Gerard was sent to Hamburg to take his command; General Grenier was allowed to bring back the army from Italy without having received any particular orders as to its disposition; and Augereau was to command during the peace the troops in Dauphiné, that he had commanded so badly during the war, but which, judging at least by his late proclamation, he did not seem inclined to give up to Napoleon. Lastly, with regard to the Marshals Soult and Suchet, the decision of the government was influenced by the report they had lately received. According to these reports, Marshal Suchet had shown himself calm and temperate; Marshal Soult, refractory, hostile, and inordinately attached to the empire. The latter was ordered to give up his command to Marshal Suchet, who thus became chief of the veteran armies of Aragon and of Castille.

These pressing matters having been arranged, it was equally urgent to come to some resolution touching the army. The question to be debated was the conscription, a necessary but at that time universally detested institution. The government, notwithstanding the imprudent promises of the princes, came to the wise resolution of passing no law on the subject at that time, but adjourned the debate, under pretext of respectfully reserving for the consideration of the absent monarch every deeply important question. But as it was necessary to take some notice of the prevailing desertion, it was decided that the conscripts of 1815, enlisted in 1814, according to the emperor's custom of anticipating the conscriptions by a year, might remain in their homes if they had not yet joined, or return home if they had already quitted their parishes. This was only in some sort legalising a proceeding already generally adopted. The government wisely considered that the soldiers who were returning in vast numbers from Italy, Spain, Germany, Russia, and England, where they had been either prisoners of war or had garrisoned the fortresses that had been surrendered, would supply the army with excellent soldiers, and in greater numbers, in fact, than they could afford to pay.

Money payments had become one of the principal difficulties of the new government. Napoleon during the latter part of his reign had supported the treasury by loans, furnished from the savings he had made out of the civil list after the *domaine extraordinaire* was exhausted. Out of about 150 millions which

he had saved from his different civil lists, he possessed, as we have seen, about eighteen millions in January 1814, of which ten millions, with the emperor's private plate, had been forcibly taken from Marie Louise at Orleans. The perpetrators of this act of rapine, regarding this booty as a recovered portion of the public property, wished to bring the waggons containing the ten millions to the Tuileries, and duteously present them to the Count d'Artois; and in fact, the prize had been conducted intact to the prince's portal.

When Baron Louis, the minister of finance, learned this, he was irritated beyond expression. He was, as we have said, a man of impetuous temper, but great intellect, imbued with the soundest principles of finance, understanding perfectly well the resources afforded by an unblemished public credit, and he alone was capable, under existing circumstances, of attempting the proof, and succeeding in the attempt. To the depth and vastness of his views he united a love of order that amounted to passion. He had warmly espoused the cause of the Bourbons, not because he approved the principles of the emigration, but through a sincere desire of establishing constitutional liberty, which he believed could only be obtained under the Bourbons. Notwithstanding his devotedness to the new government, when he learned that the ten millions which he needed so much had been transported to the Tuileries, he was highly exasperated, both on account of the loss and the irregularity of the proceeding. He immediately assembled the principal members of the ministry and of the prince's council, informed them of what had occurred, and declared that if the ten millions were not instantly sent to the treasury, he would send in his resignation. The members endeavoured to calm him; they advised him to go to the prince, and explain with moderation and politeness the rules established since 1789 concerning the disposal of the public money, and they promised him that he should receive full satisfaction.

Baron Louis, somewhat tranquillised, sought the Count d'Artois, whom he surprised, but did not displease, by the vigour of his language. He found no difficulty in persuading him to restore money that he had never intended to appropriate to his own use, and which at worst he only would have applied to the benefit of his distressed friends, had he not been told it was the property of the State, and absolutely needed for the discharge of the public debts. The ten millions were restored with the exception of about 500,000 f., which were employed to defray the expenses of the prince's household.

This supply was a most timely relief, and being in specie, was of still greater utility. No person has perhaps ever understood more thoroughly than M. Louis that the secret of

maintaining an unblemished credit is by punctually fulfilling our engagements. It is a common error amongst political parties of all times to care little about the engagements contracted by their predecessors, and royalists were not wanting at the period of which we speak who were disposed to treat lightly the debts incurred during the time of the empire and the Revolution. But M. Louis declared firmly that though resolved to economise every penny of the public money, he would never defraud the State creditors of their due, and that consequently former debts, on whatever account incurred, should be faithfully paid. He added, what gave his declaration greater weight, that he was determined to maintain the existing taxes, spite of the clamours of parties or the cries of the populace. A few thoughtless words uttered by the princes immediately on their return to France were not, in his opinion, a reason for deviating from the principles of sound finance. The indirect taxes and the conscription were necessary, for every government stands in need of men and money, and government ought therefore to have the courage to maintain these two institutions.

The presence of the Count d'Artois, who of all the princes had been the most lavish in promises, put no restraint on the courageous minister, and he asserted that if the government did not immediately declare in favour of the maintenance of all the ordinary and extraordinary taxes already voted for 1814, it would be impossible to carry on the public business, and that for his part he would not undertake it. He was satisfied on this point by being told that when the king arrived, a strict and minute inquiry should be made into existing taxes. M. Louis therefore continued provisionally the *droits réunis*, with the exception of some changes of form, made in compliance with popular feeling. Thus the tax known as *detail* had always been odious to the lower classes, because it was collected at the public-house. M. Louis, still maintaining the tax, permitted that in towns where there was an *octroi*, the *detail* should be converted into an increase on the entrance duties. He also permitted some simplification in the tax *de mouvement*, which was collected when spirituous liquors were removed from one place to another. Excepting these slight concessions, M. Louis remained immovable on the subject of taxation, and brought over the entire council to his opinion. M. de Talleyrand and his colleagues smiled at the earnestness of the minister of finance, but even in smiling they gave the Count d'Artois an example of respecting and yielding to that passion so rare, a passion for the public good. The Count d'Artois, at once ignorant and compliant, and moreover, unmindful of his promises, allowed the minister and his council to do as they pleased,

being well inclined to listen to men who were reputed to know what he and his companions in misfortune were absolutely ignorant of.

Self-interest inspires a quick and delicate tact that early discovers those that are deserving of confidence. The French public soon perceived that they had to do with a minister of finance who was willing to pay, without exception, all the legitimate public debts, and that in order to do so he did not fear to maintain the necessary taxes, caring little about being unpopular, provided he could establish the credit of the State. This credit was created as if by magic, thanks to the prospects of an assured peace, and thanks to a minister whose principles were so lofty and so firmly expressed. Commercial men, the chief organs of public confidence, manifested an extreme eagerness to aid M. Louis, and the latter was immediately able to carry into effect a measure which before would have been impossible; he intended to issue bills at short date, that is to say, exchequer bills.

Custom has consecrated in modern States two kinds of public debt—the funded debt, where the stock is not terminable, or terminable at a very remote period; and the floating debt, where bills are of short date, and the interest varies according to the state of the public credit. Thus in England and France there are interminable annuities, and exchequer or treasury bonds. The discredit resulting from bankruptcy had been so great after the time of the Directory, that during the empire Napoleon had never been able to issue a treasury bond, and was even obliged to cloak the principle involved by never mentioning the treasury. On this account he had recourse to bills of the receivers-general; M. Mollien having afterwards wisely created the *caisse de service*, the receivers-generals' bills were converted into *caisse de service* bills. These were in reality exchequer bills, only the government dared not to call them so. In 1814 the *caisse de service* was so involved in debt that the managers dared not issue another bill in addition to those in circulation. M. Louis did not hesitate to create a new floating debt by issuing exchequer bills for ten millions at short date, and at an interest proportioned to existing circumstances. These bills, thanks to the confidence inspired by the minister, were readily accepted. The government had received from Orleans ten millions in specie; the taxes were levied, and though not paid in some provinces, they still furnished supplies, and the government was able during the first month to distribute amongst the heads of the different departments fifty million francs in ready money, which put all the public departments into full operation. Business received a favourable impulse, which contributed to revive the credit on which the State was henceforth to subsist.

Whilst M. Louis began in this way to establish the public credit, he showed equal firmness in maintaining order, which had been the chief merit of the imperial system of finance, and he continued the custom of presenting to the council every month a synopsis of the expenses of the coming month, that proper measures might be taken to find the supplies.

The finances, which were the great difficulty of the new government, began to assume a favourable aspect, thanks to the skilful and active-minded minister who had taken the burden upon himself. It was necessary in this department of the administration to provide against the serious difficulty resulting from the extraordinary position of the national commerce, to which we have already alluded. Though Napoleon had, through want of patience, failed in conquering England by the system of continental blockade, he had at least laid the foundation of our manufactures. The spinning and weaving of cotton and wool, the mode of preparing iron, and its application to different uses, had made extraordinary progress. The extraction of sugar from vegetables of European growth, and the dyeing of stuffs by chemical agency, had made a not less astonishing advance. Our manufactures were presentable in every market, at a disadvantage, certainly, as to price, but equal and often superior in quality to British produce. But Napoleon, wishing to destroy the commerce as well as the industry of Great Britain, was not satisfied with forbidding the importation of English manufactured goods, he also prohibited the raw material carried under the British flag, such as raw cotton, indigo, dyeing wood, sugar, coffee, &c. In 1810, instead of the prohibition, he substituted the famous tariff of fifty per cent., which all these articles were obliged to pay. Nevertheless, our manufactures had been able to support this tax, being protected from English competition by these high prohibitory duties. It is easy to conceive, without comment, how great must have been, under such circumstances, the perturbation caused by the sudden influx of British manufactures. And sugars, coffees, cotton goods, &c., so ardently longed for by the inhabitants of the continent, and scattered abundantly throughout Germany since 1813, were poured into France in 1814 in the train of the allied armies. These goods had passed the Rhine, the Schelde, the Meuse, and followed the allied soldiers step by step, or else they had been landed on the coast, for our ports had, even before receiving orders from Paris, admitted the British flag. The consequence was that our cotton goods had to contend with the English, which, to their economical mode of fabrication, united the advantage of not having had to pay fifty per cent. on the raw material; and the English coffee, which cost 28 sous at London, and in our ports stood at 38, had

to compete with the French coffee, which, having had to pay a duty of 44 sous, was absolutely unsaleable, as the purchaser would have had to pay more than four francs. It was the same with sugar and all colonial produce. Had peace been established without a foreign invasion, the most natural mode would have been to suppress these duties gradually, leaving time to sell off the goods that had been taxed so highly. But a military and commercial invasion having taken place at the same moment, we were obliged to submit to the consequences of both, but not to prolong the evil by keeping up a tariff that became unsuitable to the commercial condition of the country. For example, raw cotton ought to be admitted duty free, in order that our manufacturers might be less burdened in competing with British productions. It would also be necessary to make a considerable reduction in the duty on sugar, coffee, and colonial produce in general, to enable the French vendor to sell at the same rate as the English. Thus, coffee, which in London cost 28 sous per pound, might very well bear a duty of six sous, which would raise the cost to 34 sous, and permit the retailer to sell at 38 sous, the current price at Paris since the arrival of the allies. Without these precautions our markets would be exclusively supplied by smugglers, who sold at the lowest price the goods that had found an entrance into France in the train of the enemy.

These considerations, clearly set forth, served as a preamble to regulations which provisionally modified the duties. By these regulations the minister suppressed the duty on cotton and several raw materials, reduced about seven-eighths the duties on sugar and coffee, and promised to re-establish the custom-houses as soon as the allied armies should have evacuated the territory, and promised to put in force at the same time a new scale of duties which would sufficiently protect our manufacturers against the foreign, without making them pay too high a price for the raw material, or putting on colonial produce, such as cotton, sugar, coffee, &c., heavier taxes than were indispensably needed by the exchequer.

These measures, though undoubtedly very prudent, did not entirely tranquillise the manufacturing towns, where an apprehension prevailed that, under the reign of princes just returned from England, British trade would be favoured. The new regulations, however, lessened the existing pressure, soothed public uneasiness, and gave reason to hope that a better system would be established as soon as circumstances would permit the application of a definite system of legislation to commerce and industry.

To these measures of general interest were added others, exclusively applicable to the provinces ravaged by the war.

Commissioners were sent to rebuild the bridges that had been destroyed, to repair the roads that had been broken up, to bury the dead, to reorganise the postal service, and in a word, to establish order as far as possible. On every side the people, who had been afflicted by the misfortunes of the country, but who now began to be consoled by the prospect of peace, and to have confidence in the Bourbons, complied with the demands made on them, and even afforded manual aid in execution of the orders that came from Paris. However, if the government succeeded in triumphing over the principal difficulties in the unoccupied provinces, it was quite different in those where the enemy still remained. In the latter the foreign troops presented a serious obstacle. They arrogated to themselves the rights of absolute authority, and committed excesses of all kinds. They did not limit their crimes to despoiling chateaux, to pillaging cottages, and outraging women; they seized the property of the State, and endeavoured to sell for their private advantage the woods, as well as the stores of salt, and the metals contained in our arsenals. It was a scene of universal spoliation, both private and public, which, besides ruining the country, exasperated the inhabitants, and rendered them ill disposed towards the new government, unjustly reputed allies and accomplices of the foreigners.

A universal cry was raised demanding the departure of the allied armies. Their generals had declared, on passing the Rhine, that they had come, not to humiliate France, but to set her free. Napoleon being conquered, disarmed, and departed, and the Bourbons universally recognised, why should the allied armies remain longer in France?

This reasoning, which was perfectly just, was rendered more impressive by the sufferings of the people, and had become the dominant feeling; consequently, an unanimous appeal was made to the ministers, and by the ministers presented to the prince to whom the royal authority had been delegated, demanding the immediate evacuation of the French territory by the foreigners. This appeal, so natural, so general, so becoming, was, however, imprudent. In fact, how could we speak to the allied sovereigns of evacuating our territory without provoking a similar demand on their part with regard to the foreign places we still occupied? These places were fortresses, such as Hamburg, Magdeburg, the Texel, Flushing, Bergen-op-Zoom, Antwerp, Mons, Luxemburg, Mayence, Lerida, Tarragona, Figuères, and Girona, filled with a large war matériel, and some of the harbours containing magnificent fleets. Was it possible to ask the Austrians, the Russians, the Prussians, the English, to quit Champagne, Lorraine, Alsace, Languedoc, without expecting them in return to ask us to give up these first-class fortresses,

which it was intended we should ultimately lose? The consequence of such a step would be the serious inconvenience of giving up pledges which, in the negotiation of a future peace, would be of the highest importance. Undoubtedly, the conditions of this peace could not vary much, for the principles of the frontiers of 1790 were so generally admitted that it was only the victorious sword of Napoleon which could effect a change. But in consenting to abandon the Rhenish provinces and Belgium, that is to say, the Rhine and the Schelde, there remained between these rivers and the limits of 1790 an extensive and solid frontier which might have been claimed by France, as we shall see presently; a frontier that might have been obtained by negotiating with firmness and patience in the name of the Bourbons, in virtue of the goodwill they inspired, and the desire the allies felt to render them popular. One means of securing success would certainly have been the possession of such pledges as we were about to surrender, for it is easy to imagine how great would have been the embarrassment of the allied sovereigns had they been obliged to recover by force Hamburg, Magdeburg, Antwerp, Mayence, &c., &c. But was it possible, we repeat, to demand the evacuation of France without instantly provoking a similar demand with regard to the territories we occupied beyond the limits of our ancient frontiers? Evidently not, and no negotiator could have obtained a hearing who would have advanced the one demand without admitting the other.

We certainly might have consented to the evacuation of the more remote fortresses, such as Hamburg, Magdeburg, the Texel, and Flushing in the north; Lerida, Tarragona, and Figuères in the south; and endeavoured to retain Antwerp, Mayence, Luxemburg, and Mons, as lying nearer. But the allied powers would have seen in this proposition an intention to contest the frontiers of 1790, and the offer of a partial evacuation would have been as unacceptable as an absolute refusal to give up any of the fortresses.

A wiser mode of acting would have been to wait patiently for two months longer, asking the Emperor Alexander and his allies to give positive orders to their soldiers to treat our unhappy provinces less cruelly. If the French, amid their sufferings, had been capable of reflection, they would not have failed to perceive that even had the foreign armies signed an act of evacuation on the spot, they could not have left before two months on account of their claims on some of the magazines, and that before the expiration of two months, as the event proved, peace might be signed. The king, it is true, was absent, but his absence, which was no impediment to yielding the principal European fortresses, could have been

no obstacle to commence at least discussing the bases of peace. But grief does not reason, and the unanimous and ardent desire of the nation forced the government to commence negotiations for an evacuation which should necessarily be reciprocal. Let us in justice add that the places which there was a question of giving up, Hamburg, Magdeburg, the Texel, Lerida, Tarragona, and others, were evidences of a madly ambitious policy, which had fallen into general disrepute, and traces of which no one cared to preserve.

M. de Talleyrand, who naturally enough had been commissioned to conduct the negotiations, was listened to by the representatives of the allied powers with profound attention and a feigned benevolence for France, which, they said, they had hastened to deliver from foreign occupation. In reality, the allies were extremely anxious to obtain possession of the fortresses that we held. Prussia was undoubtedly certain of sooner or later getting possession of Magdeburg and Hamburg; England of having Antwerp; and Austria, Mayence; but ardent desires are accompanied by an impatience that can only be satisfied by immediate possession. The allies promised to evacuate France without delay, on condition that our garrisons would evacuate the places we have named. It was therefore no longer possible to retain Antwerp, Mayence, Luxemburg, by restoring Hamburg, Magdeburg, &c.; yet the allied monarchs had promised to treat France under the Bourbons better than under the Bonapartes. Their ministers did not deny this, and still holding firmly by the principle of the frontiers of 1790, they spoke of a territorial extension beyond these frontiers, which might be represented by a million souls. Finding it impossible to do better, M. de Talleyrand was obliged to be content with this promise. There now remained the serious consideration of what was to be done with the matériel contained in the fortresses we were about to give up. There was in these fortresses, besides the field artillery, a vast war matériel of every kind, which might have been, if not saved, at least disputed. But no attention was paid to this, both parties were so anxious to come to a conclusion. It was stipulated that our troops should leave with arms and baggage, and three field-pieces to every thousand men. It was certainly only a loss in money of thirty or perhaps forty million francs, by no means comparable to the loss of territory, but still it was a loss. But our magnificent fleets lying in certain harbours were not forgotten, and this part of the matériel was reserved as an object of future consideration, when negotiations for a definite peace should be commenced.

It was consequently agreed that the foreign troops should evacuate the French territory (that of 1790) in proportion as

we withdrew our troops from the remote fortresses we occupied, leaving those of the Rhine within ten days, those of Piedmont and Italy in fifteen, and the Spanish fortresses within twenty days. The most distant should be evacuated by the 1st June. It was arranged besides, that prisoners of every nation, no matter in what place they might be found, should be immediately set at liberty.

This convention being signed by M. de Talleyrand, was the same day submitted to the Count d'Artois and his council. It is a singular fact, and one that proves the strength of an absorbing idea, that no observation was made on this convention, because it fulfilled a universal wish, that of removing foreigners from the soil of France.* The unfortunate prince upon whom this act afterwards induced an unmerited unpopularity, was incapable of foreseeing the consequences of what he did, and sincerely believed that he was delivering France from the presence of foreign soldiers; he therefore joyfully signed the deed. It was instantly published, and on the first day excited no more remark than it had done at the royal council. But the voice of criticism was soon heard, and thanks to a sudden change in public opinion, became as bitter as universal.

In fact, a very great change had taken place in the public mind since the deposition of Napoleon, that is to say, within a month. The absolute submission and the almost perfect silence that prevailed during the empire, had been suddenly replaced by an extraordinary frankness of sentiment and language. Whilst the idea of the return of the Bourbons, which at first appeared strange and rather surprising, began to be received by the mass of the public, and regarded as a prudent measure, and that the Bourbons themselves were gaining a certain amount of popularity on account of their misfortunes and their virtues, a sharp and bitter quarrel suddenly sprung up between parties newly called into existence. The press had recovered a certain liberty enjoyed by sufferance, but not by right, for the imperial regulations concerning publications were still in force. The new government had contented themselves with restoring to the proprietors of public journals the property of which they had been deprived by Napoleon, and required of them in return, the appointment of a principal editor who should be accountable for the acts of each journal. The liberty of the press had sprung up under the equivocal form which made it dependent on a censorship. As usual, the press had become the expression of the passion of the day, and this passion was detestation of the empire, of its incessant wars and

* M. de Vitrolles, an eye-witness, and who noted down events as they occurred, says that not a single remark was made in the royal council.

arbitrary government. There consequently prevailed a fearful excitement against Napoleon, against his family, against his ministers, and against everything that belonged to him. And public opinion, soon running farther back, passed from the empire to the Revolution, which became an object of no less anger than Napoleon himself. Though the Count d'Artois, on entering Paris, had spoken of an act of oblivion, though the Senate had made such an express condition of the recall of the Bourbons, this act of oblivion, so much easier to promise than put into execution, had not been put into practice by any one. The cruel death of the Duke d'Enghien was commented on, and still more violently was the iniquitous death of the unfortunate Louis XVI. condemned. In this regard, so strong was popular feeling, that Napoleon for a while gave place to the regicides, upon whom a torrent of abuse was poured. Undoubtedly, the existing generation should have lost all memory and every sense of justice and humanity not to be penetrated with the profoundest pity in recalling to memory the punishment inflicted by fanatics on one of our best kings; and yet with regard to the tranquillity of France and the development of its destinies, this cry of the public conscience was a very great imprudence. The clergy, more thoughtless, if possible, than the royalists, and less justifiable in such demonstrations, entertained strong antipathies, of which Cardinal Maury was the principal object. Priests, of whom very few had dared to defend the cause of the Church during the Revolution, and of whom not one had refused ecclesiastical favours under the empire, could not pardon Cardinal Maury, the most eloquent and courageous defender of his order, for having accepted the diocese of Paris. They had commenced by overwhelming him with insults, then declared the diocese vacant, nominated vicars-capitulary, and used every possible means to induce the cardinal archbishop to abandon his diocese. Thus violently persecuted, he quitted Paris, and ceded the place to his embittered enemies.

When parties are sought for in this manner they are easily found. In fact, a few days had sufficed to revive and gather together all the men whom the royalists attacked in this manner. At the first return of the Bourbons, these men, divided and confounded, had held their peace. The revolutionists, avenged by the fall of the empire, had experienced a moment of joy. The civil and military functionaries, eager to secure their own safety, had at first thought only of giving in their adhesion to the Bourbons, and had given it, execrating at the same time the Senate that had dethroned Napoleon, and applauding the railleries uttered by the royalists against that body. But after a few days' reflection, the revolutionists and the civil and military functionaries felt their fate was cast in common, and that if

the Senate had struck them in striking Napoleon, it had also defended them in stipulating constitutional guarantees. They consequently began to take part with the Senate. In reading in the journals of the triumphant party—the only ones that enjoyed the freedom of the press—furious declamations against all that had taken place since 1790, in seeing gather round the princes and round the special commissioners the men of former times, they felt that under the new order of things they could not fail to be in peril, or at least in disfavour. The military men especially (we mean the officers), quitting the ranks, like the soldiers, had come in numbers to Paris. They crowded the streets and public places, where they participated in the general agitation, and sought to know what was to be their fate. The war minister, General Dupont, had issued an order, commanding them to return to their regiments—the only place, said this order, where they would learn the fate reserved for them. Amid the general confusion scarcely one of these officers had obeyed. They still crowded the capital, where the presence of foreign soldiers irritated them deeply, and provoked on their part the most dangerous expressions of feeling. They took especial pleasure in declaiming against the *traitors* who, they said, had betrayed Napoleon and France.

The convention of the 23rd April, whose conditions, as we have already explained, were inevitable, was at first received as a natural and even as a very desirable event, because it stipulated the evacuation of France by the foreign troops; but ill-disposed people soon began to put forth different opinions. Though the surrender of Hamburg, Magdeburg, Lerida, did not really touch the solid greatness of France, yet these names recalled undying memories, and besides, when to these remote fortresses were added Mayence, Luxemburg, Wesel, Flushing, and Antwerp, which we were accustomed to look on as French possessions, in seeing all these fortresses given up with the single stroke of the pen, without any guarantee for indemnification, military men were touched with sincere grief. The public even, the rational, disinterested public, spite of the joy infused by peace, spite of their well-founded dislike to distant conquests, could not help feeling a profound sadness in seeing so many important fortresses abandoned, and though they did not cry out treason, as did the military men, yet they felt that they were under the iron hand of foreigners, who, whilst flattering France in order to render her more manageable, left her only so much of her greatness as they could not deprive her of.

Still the dominant sentiment was a lively and universal satisfaction at the prospect of peace, and if a bitter censure were heard, it was from the lips of men whose existence was imperilled by the change of government, or who were disturbed

in their retreat by outbursts of royalist feeling. As to the Count d'Artois, he did all in his power to satisfy everybody, and especially to win the good graces of the army. He invited the marshals, generals, and colonels who were staying at Paris to dinner; he used every exertion to please them; but they felt sensibly that at the Tuileries they were only passing acquaintances, not intimate friends. The abiding guests in this palace, which had been occupied, and was still destined to be occupied, by so many generations, of various origins, of different modes of thinking and of different sentiments—the abiding guests, we say, at the Tuileries were the royalists, who began to flock to Paris in great numbers from the provinces, or from those lands whither they had emigrated. Less caressed, less flattered than the heads of the army, but evidently more loved, they alone enjoyed a real intimacy. They came at all hours, and when the Count d'Artois could not receive them himself, he deputed his most confidential friends to do so. These received, as we have already said, their protestations of affection and offers of service; and moreover, the reports made by these royalists were received with attention; they were formed into a kind of police, who, merely officious in the commencement, would one day pretend to play a higher part.

We have already spoken of these daring men, whom the Count d'Artois had had the weakness to admit to his confidence, and to whom he had the imprudence to confide important missions, or allow them to assume such. Some of these men had taken upon themselves to pursue the Princess Catherine, wife of Prince Jerome Napoleon. This princess, daughter to the King of Wurtemberg, and universally respected on account of her personal qualities, was arrested near Fossard, when on her way to Germany. She was robbed of everything. The men who arrested her said they were commissioned by government to restore to the treasury property belonging to the State, and under this pretext, the baggage taken from the princess was brought to the Tuileries apparently intact. Scarcely was this act consummated, when the Emperor of Russia, having learned what had occurred, became indignant, and sent his minister to complain, and demand reparation for the insult offered to a respectable princess, protected by the treaty of the 11th April, and moreover, his own near relative. The first act of reparation was to restore the princess's trunks, which were all found empty. The diamonds belonging to the princess, which were valued at 1,500,000 f., had disappeared. The men who had arrested the princess denied the robbery, and threatened, if anything further were said about it, to compromise the provisional government by declaring what their real mission was. Of this mission they made no secret; it was to assassinate Napoleon.

The affair was certainly of a doubtful character, but amid the existing chaos it was evident that many imprudent expressions had been allowed to find utterance; and if things went on in this manner, disagreeable incidents might become more frequent. The Count d'Artois had been now twenty days at Paris, and the arrival of Louis XVIII. was already anxiously desired, in order that he might assume the reins of government. This was the wish of the prince's most enlightened friends; it was the wish of the prince himself, who, though anxious to meddle in everything, was alarmed at seeing his responsibility every day increasing. It was one day the question of taxation on which he was called on to decide; another day, the commercial interests of the country formed the subject of debate, or perhaps the extent of the French territory; and all this in the absence of a brother, of whom the Count d'Artois stood much in fear, who was king, and very jealous of his authority. The Count d'Artois had been joined by his two sons. The Duke d'Angoulême, a modest and courageous prince, not very intellectual, but steady and prudent, had landed a month before at Bordeaux. The Duke de Berry, who had entered France by Brittany and Normandy, possessed considerable talent; his sentiments were generous, but he was hot-headed. These two young princes were received at the gates of Paris with great pomp and many demonstrations of joy. They brought in their train a fresh contingent of devoted royalists, and these arrivals were not a pledge of greater unity and prudence in the government.

The presence of the king was therefore justly wished for, because much was hoped from his prudence, and because many were anxious for the speedy solution of questions that were left in suspense until the king's arrival. How would this monarch receive the conditions that the Senate wished to impose on him? What value would he attach to the engagements contracted in his name by the Count d'Artois? These were doubts which it was important to solve, and waiting the solution, each had endeavoured to induce Louis XVIII. to regard his particular views and interests with favour. The Count d'Artois had sent to inform his brother that the engagement into which he had entered was of a very general character, that consequently the king was absolutely free with regard to the substance of the senatorial constitution, and still freer with respect to the required oath; that no positive engagement was contracted; and that with regard to the general bases of the constitution, there was a reservation in favour of the royal pleasure, which left a great latitude. It was evident that the Count d'Artois, to excuse his having assumed too much authority, sought to make the pledges he had given the Senate appear as light as

possible. M. de Talleyrand had at first sent M. de Liancourt to Louis XVIII., and he had neither been well received nor his reports listened to, as we shall soon see; others of less note were afterwards sent; whilst M. de Talleyrand, instead of speaking of things as they really were, adopted a tone of complaisance, and wishing to impress the new king with the idea that his authority had not been infringed, he sent him word that with some flattery to the marshals, and a general declaration in conformity with the prevailing opinions of the day, which should be published immediately on his entrance into France, all existing necessities would be satisfied. M. de Montesquiou, though still adhering to his peculiar view of matters, had been more truthful and more firm. He had, in writing to Louis XVIII., displayed much irritation against the Senate, and against the pretensions put forth by this body to impose conditions on the king, but he had not sought to depreciate either the gravity of the engagements contracted, nor the power the Senate still possessed. He said that France was not so deeply imbued with a royalist spirit as some persons took pleasure in believing; that many regretted the days of the empire; that others, strongly attached to revolutionary principles, had not made up their minds to abandon them; that the army especially was in general hostile to the legitimate dynasty; that these different classes of malcontents, having physical force on their side, were ready to take part with the Senate, and so render that body formidable; it would therefore be better to make a compromise with the Senate, however disagreeable such a proceeding might be; that the jealousy of the legislative corps might be turned to some advantage, but that this body was weak and incompetent; that the Senate still possessed the chief power; that it would be better to select from the senatorial constitution whatever was least objectionable, and from these materials frame an act purporting to emanate from the royal authority alone; that besides, the finances were in a perilous state, and would probably necessitate a considerable loan, and that without the intervention of the great bodies of the State, lenders could not be found. Though these opinions were not in every respect correct, they represented more exactly the real state of things than the accounts forwarded by the Count d'Artois and M. de Talleyrand. On the whole, the intelligence sent by all caused considerable surprise at Hartwell.

Louis XVIII., who, after the death of Louis XVII., the unfortunate son of Louis XVI., had become legitimate king according to the principles of hereditary monarchy, had resided for several years at Hartwell, in England, where his love of study and natural tranquillity of disposition had induced him

to fix his abode. He had, so to speak, lulled himself to sleep in the peaceful uniformity of his exile, when the terrible events of 1812 suddenly awakened in his heart hopes that were almost extinguished. He then thought proper to make certain declarations, less vague than the preceding, promising to reform ancient abuses, to forget the past, and respect the alienation of the *biens nationaux,* conditions which at that time comprised the entire programme of the most liberal-minded emigrants. These declarations, scattered through Europe, had never been heard of in France. When Louis XVIII. learned the acts of the Senate, he experienced a delight quite as strong as what the Count d'Artois had felt, though less demonstrative; and in the first moments of his joy he thought no more than his brother had done at Nancy of disputing the conditions on which he was to be recalled to the throne. Consequently, M. de Blacas, who had become his confidant and the executor of all his wishes, received orders to prepare his act of adhesion to the senatorial constitution. Nor did Louis XVIII. think he purchased too dearly his return to France by accepting a form of government which, since his abode at Hartwell, he had himself seen in operation to the great advantage of England, and without any other inconvenience than disagreements, which sometimes became serious for the ministers.

It was in these dispositions that Louis XVIII. was found by the emissaries of the Count d'Artois, of M. de Talleyrand, and M. de Montesquiou. Very yielding, as we have seen, with regard to things, he was much less accommodating when persons were in question, for old prejudices yield more easily to the former than the latter. Things have no living features; but persons, on the contrary, have, which revive painful impressions and implacable rancours. The worthy M. de Liancourt, hateful to the ancient noblesse because of the good sense he had displayed in the earlier period of the Revolution, was so coldly received at Hartwell, when sent there by M. de Talleyrand, that he took his immediate departure, not being of a humour to bow his high birth, his cultivated mind, and honourable life before emigrants of any rank. The reception given to the other messengers of M. de Talleyrand was very different, and still more so to those of the Count d'Artois and M. de Montesquiou. As soon as Louis XVIII. learned that these gentlemen had preserved intact the essential principle of legitimate royalty, such as the ultra-royalists understood it, and that he could still retain, not only the colours of the house of Bourbon, but was not even obliged to submit to any condition, nor take an oath, and that it would be sufficient to make a general declaration of principles to satisfy the exigencies of his position, he laid aside his act of adhesion, and prepared to assume an

absolutely royal attitude. He had been advised, on leaving England, to make his progress slowly, in order to receive en route the homages of the inhabitants, and to make a stay in one of the ancient royal castles, that of Compiègne, for example, which had been splendidly fitted up by Napoleon. There he could hear and see everybody, and become acquainted with men and things before entering Paris, and assuming engagements which would be now personal and obligatory. This advice he promised to follow, and decided that, after visiting at London the Prince-Regent of England, the host to whom he was indebted for such noble hospitality, he would repair by Calais to Compiègne, to receive there the first homage of his subjects.

It was on the 20th of April that Louis XVIII. made his entrance into London. We may easily divine, without need of expatiating on the subject, what were the sentiments of the English people on seeing the house of Bourbon again in possession of the throne of France. Whilst that every power in Europe had in succession recognised him who was called the usurper, and refused shelter to the Bourbons, England alone had never acknowledged Napoleon as emperor; she had received the proscribed princes, and had thrown over them the protection of her inviolable hospitality. In truth, though her ministers denied it in Parliament, she had always sought the restoration of the Bourbons as the most certain means of avenging herself of Napoleon and the French Revolution.

Though England had more than once been desirous of peace, though she had been more than once ready to conclude it, and had only been prevented by the obstinacy of Napoleon with regard to Spain, she now forgot these moments of weakness, and thought only of the last triumph of the coalition, of which she attributed all the merit to herself. According to English reports, it was not Prussian, Austrian, or Russian generals with whom Napoleon had to do in the terrible campaigns of 1813 and 1814; it was to Lord Wellington the definite success was due; and yet it must be avowed that it was Marshal Soult, and not Napoleon, whom Wellington encountered. But nothing could efface these notions from the minds of the English, who were absolutely intoxicated with joy and pride. It is undeniable that the English had had a considerable share in bringing about the general result, but it is also true that they had received the largest share of profit. They also believed, and to a greater extent than they were warranted, that the Bourbon princes, now accustomed to the English habits, and imbued with the English spirit, would be the firmest supporters of British policy. Influenced by these feelings, the English resolved to give Louis XVIII. a magnificent reception. During the three days this prince passed at London, all the English wore the white cockade,

and he was received with acclamations as joyous as could have been expected in his own capital. Louis XVIII. entered the palace of the prince-regent leaning on the arm of this prince, and having on his left hand the Duke of York; he was thus conducted to the chair of State, in quality of king and guest. No sooner was he seated than he listened with proud self-possession to the speech of the prince-regent, who congratulated him on his restoration to the throne of France; and he congratulated him on it as an event, not alone fortunate for France, but for England, for Europe, for the entire world—an event which every man in England felt as a personal advantage. Louis XVIII. replied to this discourse by thanking the prince for the proofs he received of his friendship, and for his generous hospitality, and added those sadly memorable words—*that it was to his prudent advice, to his noble efforts, to the indefatigable perseverance of his nation, that he should always attribute, under Providence, the restoration of his family to the throne of France.*

These words, so completely in unison with the pretensions put forth by the English, and even with their hopes, were listened to with transport. Instantly circulated with the promptitude of British publicity, they produced an extraordinary effect. In uttering these words, had Louis XVIII. thought only of his hosts, to whom he wished to testify his well-founded gratitude in terms the most calculated to gratify them? Or, had he thought of the Senate who pretended to recall him to the throne conditionally, or of the continental sovereigns who supported the Senate, and who, basing their pretensions on the services they had rendered to the house of Bourbon, thought themselves justified in giving the king advice, and expecting him to follow it? Did he mean to say to both parties that he had reason to be grateful only to God and to England? It is difficult to say; but it is possible that he was at the time influenced solely by a feeling of courtesy towards the nation to whom he believed himself more indebted than to any other. Whatever may have been the motive that dictated these words, the effect, as often happens, was destined to be greater than the cause.

Fêted at London during three days, and greeted wherever he appeared with enthusiastic applause, Louis XVIII., before leaving, invested the prince-regent with the *cordon bleu*, the highest distinction in the power of a French monarch to bestow, and which implied the restoration of the order of the St. Esprit. He left London on the 23rd April, and arrived the same day at Dover, accompanied by the prince-regent, the greater number of the English princes, and the most distinguished members of the aristocracy. The next day, the 24th, he embarked and set sail for Calais, escorted by a fleet of eight ships of the line,

several frigates, and a number of smaller vessels. The inhabitants of Dover and the environs, headed by the prince-regent, all wearing the white cockade, and waving white handkerchiefs, saluted the French monarch with loud cheers, and did not leave the shore whilst his ship remained in sight. The Duke of Clarence accompanied Louis XVIII. to the coast of France, and took leave of him, amid the roar of the cannon of both nations, a sound that had not wakened the echoes of that locality since the time of the camp at Boulogne. What a contrast! what changes! Alas! in our fitful century, two or three years have often sufficed to bring about changes the most contradictory and the most surprising.

On arriving at Calais, the king was received by a considerable number of persons, who, so to speak, prostrated themselves before him. The people, once habituated to the idea of the restoration of the Bourbons, vied with each other in testifying their delight by the noisiest demonstrations. Besides, the inhabitants of a provincial town when visited by their sovereign are always delighted with the honour, and profoundly touched at a spectacle novel to them, they experience transports of affection, sincere certainly, but not so durable as they believe, and as may be desirable. But it was not with joy, but with tears, that Louis XVIII. was received, for the recollection of the past was dominant on this occasion, and in thinking of the long and bloody tragedy that commenced in 1789, and terminated in 1814, the French might well shed unfeigned tears. Flattery, as usual, adding something to emotion, we may divine the demonstrations of which Louis XVIII. was the object. After having devoted a day to the people of Calais and the environs, he passed the night of the 26th at Boulogne, the 27th at Abbeville, the 28th at Amiens, imbibing slowly the incense burned before his legitimate authority, and finally, on the 29th, made his entrance into Compiègne, where he was awaited by the most illustrious persons of France and of Europe.

The impatience to see the king and become acquainted with his disposition were extreme, for in this case, curiosity was heightened by the stimulant of self-interest. With what kind of master would these new subjects have to do, some of whom were the originators of the Revolution and the empire, others of the emigration? With what kind of ally would these continental monarchs have to do, who had just reinstated the house of Bourbon on the throne, and already heard their services disputed? Such were the questions which each asked himself. To judge by the attitude Louis XVIII. assumed, and the sentiments he first expressed in public, one would be tempted to believe him the haughtiest, the vainest, and least prudent of the emigrants. In fact, his words to the prince-

regent had already deeply disturbed those who had taken a part in the last revolution, and had produced a feeling of discomfort amongst the military men, who detested England more than any of the other powers, and lastly, disobliged the allied sovereigns themselves, who were not inclined to admit that England had done everything, and had been nearly equal to Providence in the late events. Yet it would have been acting with injustice towards Louis XVIII. to have judged him by these first manifestations.

The first impression that Louis XVIII. made on those already acquainted with the Count d'Artois was that there was a great difference between the two brothers. The Count d'Artois was graceful and elegant in his deportment, whilst the Count de Provence, now become Louis XVIII., was embarrassed in his manner, and awkward in his gait. Corpulent to a degree, which was burdensome at sixty (he was about this age in 1814), he was, moreover, gouty, and walked with difficulty, leaning on a cane. He wore a blue coat with a general's epaulettes, a small English hat, and gaiters of red velvet completely enveloping his infirm legs. But above this cumbrous and awkward body there rose a handsome and intelligent head, somewhat too large, differing in one particular from the general cast of the Bourbons, that the nose was not very aquiline, with a bright and commanding eye that might have become a man of genius and of lofty character. The manners of the Count d'Artois were characterised by affability and a complaisance that suited itself to everybody's humour, whilst Louis XVIII. was calm and haughty. The two princes were as different in disposition as in person. The Count d'Artois, profiting of his personal advantages, had formerly sought and enjoyed the pleasures of the world, and led a frivolous life at the court of Marie Antoinette; but when the day of adversity came, he repented, became a pious Christian, and of his former life retained only his amiability of manner.

Louis XVIII., on the contrary, destitute of the physical advantages of his brother, sought an indemnification in study, to which he applied assiduously, endeavouring to become solidly instructed, but he only succeeded in acquiring superficial information. He associated with the literary men of his time, that is to say, with those of the second class, for a prince of the blood would have compromised himself too deeply had he sought the society of literary men of the highest class, such as Montesquiou, Voltaire, and Rousseau. Louis XVIII. favoured the philosophy of the French school, and even its revolutionary principles; but when the hour of adversity came, without repenting, like the Count d'Artois, he still preserved in his philosophy opinions that could not be deemed religious, and

retained in politics sound principles. When his brother involved himself in the exaggerations and intrigues of the emigration, he avoided the former through a natural moderation of character, and the latter through aversion to excitement, and he shunned both to mark a distinction between him and his younger brother, whose conduct he did not approve, and for whom he entertained little affection. Not devoid of kindness of heart, though possessing a somewhat malicious wit, often sarcastic, and a little egotistical, seeking above all things that repose which his infirmities rendered necessary, attaching much less importance to the exercise than to the recognition of the principle of his authority, of which he was prouder than any monarch in the world; ever ready to delegate his power to whomsoever submissively acknowledged its existence; detesting business, and avoiding it to enjoy his favourite authors—the Latin—whom he quoted often and appropriately; in fact, a crowned wit, admirably well calculated, both by the qualities he possessed, and those in which he was deficient, to play the part of a constitutional king, a part which the English monarchs have, happily for themselves and their country, acquired the habit of performing. Louis XVIII. was ensured by his defects, as much as by his good qualities, from committing those faults into which his brother was likely to fall. Such was this prince, such the portrait of him which the impartial historian ought, in our opinion, to present to future generations.

We should not, however, present a correct portrait of Louis XVIII. if we did not speak of a personage who at that time was reputed to exercise great influence over his mind. This personage was M. de Blacas. Men afflicted with physical infirmities, whether princes or private individuals, stand more in need of confidants than do other persons. This necessity is increased if, like Louis XVIII., such men are widowers without children; and if, in addition, they are occupants of a throne, they possess facilities for forming this circle of assiduous, obsequious, submissive friends who are sometimes called favourites, and to whom, either justly or unjustly, all the errors of the reign are attributed. Louis XVIII. had long reposed his confidence in M. d'Avaray, and he having died, his place was filled by M. de Blacas. Member of a noble family of Provence, he had been one of the first emigrants, and sympathised in all the sentiments of the French emigration with frigid obstinacy rather than fervent enthusiasm. He was a proud and virtuous man, tall of stature, unbending in person and disposition, and possessing as much good sense as was compatible with strong party spirit. As to the rest, he was more anxious to rule in the prince's household than in the

State, and possessed, like his master, a refined taste for the arts, in which he found refuge from the pressure of business. M. de Blacas might have become, in the hands of a skilful premier who knew how to bend the court to the designs of the government, a valuable instrument, for he might have been made the means of enunciating, at the foot of the throne, the truth which he loved when he was able to discern it. However this may be, the courtiers of the various régimes, after having saluted and flattered Louis XVIII., flocked round M. de Blacas to present him their stupid and vulgar adoration.

When Louis XVIII., accompanied by his niece the Duchess d'Angoulême, whom he called his daughter, and the two Condés, the father and grandfather of the Duke d'Enghien—he affected in this way to surround himself with the great victims of the Revolution — approached Compiègne, the crowd of courtiers, those who were not capable of being anything else, and those who might have been something much better, the marshals for example, hastened to meet him with unexampled eagerness, and had they dared, had the prince permitted it, they would have thrown themselves at his feet. The marshals had confided to Berthier, on account of his age, his position, and his talents, the task of speaking for them, and he, broken down by recent events, his mind filled with anxiety for the future career of his children, had undertaken this part, though he was fully conscious how little it became him. Without uttering a word derogatory to the great man whose glory he had shared, he gave utterance to the same commonplaces which at that time fell from every mouth.

"The marshals, as representatives of the army, hastened," he said, "to greet a father whom France during so long a time had the misfortune to disown, but to whom, taught by experience and misfortune, she now returned with transports of joy, certain of finding under his rule the repose, prosperity, and even the glory she had enjoyed under the sceptre of Henry IV. and Louis XIV. The heads of the army were anxious to offer to this father their hearts and their swords, which having never belonged to any other than to France, were especially due to the legitimate sovereign of restored and regenerated France."

If these are not the exact words, they are at least the sentiments contained in the harangue pronounced by Berthier, and deserve a place here, as a sample of all the public speeches of the time.

The king being fully aware that of all the persons concerned in the late revolution the marshals were those whom it was most necessary and easiest to flatter, mollified by the most perfect gracefulness the haughtiness for which he was indebted to his natural disposition and his social rank, he shook

hands with them, and said that in his exile he had admired their exploits, that these exploits had afforded much consolation to his paternal heart amid the woes of France, that it was a pleasure that the marshals should be the first he met on returning to the patrimony of his ancestors, that he confided in them, that he brought them peace, a precious blessing, due to his family, but that should this peace ever be disturbed, old and infirm as he was, he would march at their head, under the ancient banner of French honour. Then suiting the action to the word, Louis XVIII. took two marshals by the arm and moved through the spacious apartments of Compiègne, saluting affectionately the crowds that pressed eagerly round him, but showing a marked preference for the marshals, and making to each some appropriate remark. To the old republican Lefebvre he spoke of the gout, and conversed with the unfortunate Marmont about the wound he had received at Salamanca; he introduced the marshals in succession to his niece and to his cousins, and made them stay to dinner; during the repast, toasted the army in English liquor, and did not leave until he had charmed them by the mingled gracefulness and dignity of his manners, totally unlike either the amiability of the Count d'Artois, or the abruptness of Napoleon, whose manners, though irresistibly attractive, were harsh.

Close observers remarked with concern the foreign habits of the royal family, of which they seemed unconscious themselves: they remarked the wholly English costume of the Duchess d'Angoulême, as well as the coldness of manner which the respect inspired by her misfortunes easily rendered excusable; but close observers are rare, especially under such circumstances. But the majority were delighted, and it must be confessed that existing circumstances were calculated to excite the imagination strongly, for here were presented two conditions rarely united, antiquity the most venerable joined to novelty the most imposing. Under the rule of this ancient family, the men of the old régime recovered their position, and the modern men believed themselves secured in that which they had acquired. If, on the arrival of the Count d'Artois, comparisons were made, disadvantageous to the empire, it was still worse at Compiègne! The crowds assembled at the chateau declared that now they saw what kingly majesty was, of which they had not before had the slightest idea. And yet the greater number of these men had had the honour of approaching genius in its grandest and most striking phases. We must confess that these men would have been in the right had they said, that between a prince, born to the throne, and uniting to the lustre of his origin, talent, knowledge, and a noble cast of feature; between this tranquil authority undisturbed by self-mistrust, and

the haughty, fitful, abstracted, often harsh and abrupt rule of genius, there was a very great difference. But very few amongst them possessed so refined a taste as to discern these distinctions, and it was strange to hear Marmont, Ney, Kellermann, Oudinot, Moncey, and Berthier speaking of the *majesty* of King Louis XVIII., and assuring each new-comer that they had never seen anything similar. Such is the unceasing comedy of human life, which men never weary of playing, even though they have already played it a hundred times, and over which we shall pass rapidly, for it would be useless to hold the mirror again before their eyes, as we should never succeed in correcting that spirit of idolatry which bows before the powers that be. But Compiègne was to be the scene of something more serious than official receptions; Louis XVIII. was to receive there those high personages that held in their hands the springs that moved the machinery of the State.

The king had, during his protracted journey from Calais to Compiègne, sent M. de Blacas to Paris, to learn from the Count d'Artois, and the most reliable royalists, all that was most important for him to know. The Count d'Artois had hastened to fling himself into his brother's arms, and had received a welcome more affectionate than usual from Louis XVIII., whose heart was softened by joy. Besides, the news he brought was satisfactory. The Bourbons were momentarily becoming stronger, and the Senate weaker, for from the day that this body had, by the Duke d'Otranto's advice, made a compromise by accepting a vague and general promise, legitimate royalty had not ceased to gain ground. However, it was impossible to contest fundamental principles; and though the ultra-royalists had a horror of everything bearing the name of constitution, still a constitution could not be refused. France at every change of government had acquired such a habit of drawing up in writing the conditions of her new position, that now, too, recourse must be had to the pen; and there was no choice but to grant a government like that of England, with two chambers debating and voting on public affairs, a free press, the impartial administration of justice, the confirmation of the sale of national property, the maintenance of the Legion of Honour and of the new nobility. The Count d'Artois, M. de Montesquiou, and indeed, all who had assisted in the work for the last month, were obliged to admit this. But those points to which Louis XVIII. attached most importance had been gained. He was not even obliged to accept the senatorial constitution, he was dispensed with taking the oath, and in fact, with doing anything that had the appearance of accepting a constitution. He could give this constitution himself—give it as emanating spontaneously from his own royal authority—a

proceeding which consecrated the principle of legitimate royalty, such as the ultra-royalists understood it. Besides, he need only choose some members of the Senate, those that displeased him least, and complete the number from the ancient nobility. He could retain the legislative corps, which had given more satisfaction than the Senate, and thus compose a government more to his taste. In short, in order to make more evident the difference between this truly royal mode of proceeding and that which the Senate had at first required, the king was to enter Paris without giving a constitution, merely making a simple declaration in general terms, almost the same as that made by the Count d'Artois, an arrangement that would leave time to consider maturely the conditions of the new constitution.

These points coincided exactly with the views of Louis XVIII. He had no objection to this kind of government, which consists of two chambers, that torment the ministers, and leave the king in peace, for he had seen this system work very well in England. But his authority, which, with the blood that flowed in his veins, had descended to him from Louis XIV., Henry IV., St. Louis, and Hugh Capet—this authority had been recognised, and this was for him the principal point. To grant what were called written guarantees, couched in whatever style might be desired, provided that he was supposed to have written them himself; to receive oaths, but not to take any, was a mode of proceeding that soothed his regal pride, and gratified his feelings. He would afterwards allow the country to be governed one way or another, provided that certain limits were not overstepped, and that he should be allowed to have such men as he pleased about his person. His brother, having provided for all these conditions, was welcome, and for the first time in the king's opinion his conduct was faultless.

Firmly fixed in these points by the information he had received from the Count d'Artois, M. de Blacas, and M. de Montesquiou, he knew how to treat everybody, and he spoke with some, listened to others, was gracious with all, without promising anything, but allowing everything to be expected from his unfettered wisdom, whilst he was firmly resolved not to accept from any one an advice which had the appearance of a condition.

The most important person, and he whose first interview with the king would be of great consequence, was M. de Talleyrand, who had been for some time the principal actor on the political stage. Both Louis XVIII. and M. de Talleyrand had studied their parts well, for they were fond of acting, an art in which both excelled. M. de Talleyrand's part was the

more difficult, not because he was the less talented of the two performers, but because of his position. For men who act exclusively upon principle, success is not an absolute necessity; but for men who trust solely to their talents, it is an indispensable condition. Up to this time, between those who had refused all connection with the Revolution and those who had made a compromise with it, the advantage had appeared to be entirely on the side of the latter, for they seemed to understand in what the strength of the time lay, and joined the Revolution in order to guide it; whilst the others, blind and obstinate, had only hurried their king and friends to the scaffold. Suddenly the aspect of things changed, and those who had obstinately refused to listen to any accommodation seemed to have judged correctly; and if the long Revolution had now assumed its last phase—and the existing phase always seemed destined to be the last—it was they who would be pronounced to have acted wisely and correctly. Between Louis XVIII., returning from exile, and M. de Talleyrand, who, having alternately served the republic and the empire, had now at the end of twenty years returned to the feet of legitimacy, the advantage of position was entirely with the former. M. de Talleyrand could indeed boast of having contributed to the late change of affairs, but such services are soon forgotten. Besides, these services, in the opinion of the ultra-royalists, were only an acknowledgment of his fault, a tardy return to true principles, and for the moment Louis XVIII. was the conqueror, M. de Talleyrand the conquered, although he had himself contributed to his defeat. However, M. de Talleyrand assumed an attitude quite as haughty as that of his royal interlocutor. He also possessed exquisite tact, and a perfect knowledge of affairs, and the art of disposing of them with a word, and above all, the art of flattering without demeaning himself, and of never playing a subordinate part, even in the presence of kings and princes. Louis XVIII. and M. de Talleyrand could, therefore, meet without disadvantage on either side, and each had prepared himself thoroughly for an interview, of which both felt the importance.

Louis XVIII. received M. de Talleyrand with extreme courtesy, thanked him for his services, like a prince who felt he owed everything to his own claims, showed him that those who returned from exile were not after all those who had displayed least judgment or penetration, but he passed quickly from this subject to that of the existing state of affairs. In point of fact, the king and his future prime minister coincided, for both agreed in essentials. On one side the question was a written constitution, on the other the giving it spontaneously. There was no further need of discussion; each eagerly assented

to the points proposed by the other—to concede these two chambers, which could not be refused, and gratify military men, whom it would be sufficient to flatter, for they neither desired to govern, nor knew how. Such was M. de Talleyrand's project, and the only one to which the king offered no objection. Louis XVIII., on his side, gave M. de Talleyrand to understand that a man such as he, well skilled in the art of diplomacy, and still reflecting the éclat of the great empire, a prestige which Louis felt without acknowledging, should always be his representative before Europe. This was sufficient for M. de Talleyrand. The king and the minister then separated, after an interview which royal politeness had made sufficiently long—the king really satisfied, M. de Talleyrand affecting to be so. It may be supposed the latter was not fully content, for he did not tell any one what reasons he had to be so, and he preserved, which was unusual with him, a profound silence on the incidents of the interview, which proved at least the unimportant nature of the conversation. He contented himself with saying, to those who questioned him, that the king was a man of intelligence, of very great intelligence, of a cast of mind, indeed, of which no specimens had appeared since the end of the eighteenth century.

Meanwhile a more important visit was announced, that of the Emperor of Russia. The Emperor Alexander played, with sincerity and success, the part of the generous conqueror at Paris, and interested himself in our future destiny with a warmth and good-will that well deserved the gratitude of the French, if it were not painful to be indebted even for one's happiness to a stranger. The King of Prussia and the Emperor of Austria thought little of such things. The King of Prussia troubled himself little with what might happen to France, provided he could return to Berlin with solid assurances of peace, and large sums towards the expenses of the war; and the Emperor of Austria thought as little of the fate of France, provided he returned to Vienna with the certainty of getting Italy and the Tyrol. Let the Bourbons get out of the affair as well as they could; that was their business, and that of the French. Nothing more was asked of them than that they would not again cross the Alps or the Rhine. As for Napoleon, it would be more agreeable had he been at the Azores or St. Helena than at Elba; but there he was, and no more interest was taken in him, at least for the present. Alexander thought otherwise. Liberal, and in little danger of being taken at his word on the subject of liberty by his subjects, yet sincere in his sentiments, he thought it more consistent with his own greatness to leave the French free, and also more prudent to leave them content. In the habit of frequenting the society

of men who advocated liberal institutions, and very intimate with M. de Lafayette, who at the first hope of a free government had left his retreat at Lagrange, he became confirmed in his generous inclinations, bound himself by his words, and had in some sort taken upon himself the task of defending the ideas and interests of the Senate, to whom he took a pleasure in acknowledging his obligations, for it was to this body the allied monarchs owed the deposition of Napoleon. Discontented, not with the Count d'Artois, but with the emigrants who had hurried from England and the provinces to Paris, Alexander had sent Count Pozzo di Borgo to Compiègne to talk reason to Louis XVIII. But though very adroit, Count Pozzo could not succeed in entering into any satisfactory explanation with this king, so heavy in body and so agile in mind, and who warded off all serious remonstrance with a half natural, half affected thoughtlessness. Alexander, therefore, determined to go himself to Compiègne, a bold step, for neither the King of Prussia nor the Emperor of Austria had gone there; but it was a step that the age and vivacity of the young emperor might explain, and which could not fail to flatter Louis XVIII. extremely. Alexander wished to make him understand, that he must not only grant a constitution, but have about his person the men of the empire and Revolution, give up the idea of dating his reign from the death of Louis XVII., comply in many points with the prevailing ideas of the times, and above all, consider the army. Louis XVIII. having been apprised of this visit, determined to receive the emperor and to act towards him as he did towards all who pretended to give him advice, with dignity and general professions of good-will.

No sooner was Alexander announced than crowds of courtiers fell back, leaving face to face the head of the European coalition and the head of the old French dynasty. Flattered by this visit, and wishing to appear penetrated with gratitude, Louis XVIII. opened his arms to the young emperor and received him as a father, but as a father whose age and rank placed him above all the sovereigns of his time. Whilst he thanked him for the assistance he had given his family, he affected to refer the great events that had taken place to superior and providential causes, and especially to the influence of the great principle of which he was the representative. He seemed to have nothing to learn; when the czar spoke to him of the new position of France, he listened with politeness, but as a man to whom a young prince could not teach anything; he disputed nothing, admitted nothing, expressed decided resolutions on every subject conformable to his authority, which was not derived from any one, and to his wisdom, which

needed no counsel; he allowed his resolutions to be understood without entering into particulars, and in a word, was almost as incomprehensible to the sovereign as he had been to the ambassador. The embarrassment of the Emperor Alexander was completed by the arrival of a deputation of the legislative corps at Compiègne to compliment the king, whilst the Senate, resuming its reserve and silence towards Louis XVIII., had neglected to appear. A body that pretended to represent the nation, and that had acquired popularity by its recent resistance to Napoleon, thus hastening to meet the monarch and prostrate itself before his legitimate authority before he had made any promise, necessarily deprived the Senate's silence of its influence, and gave Alexander the appearance of an importunate adviser. This prince gave up the idea of remonstrating warmly, and returned unsuccessful, though overwhelmed with politeness; he had spoken but few words, and had obtained still fewer from his august interlocutor; he was not more contented than M. de Talleyrand, though he acknowledged it more frankly. Having two hundred thousand soldiers at his command, and being unfortunately master of France, it was more to his credit than discredit to acknowledge that he had been politely dismissed. After spending three or four days at Compiègne, in reposing himself and acquiring some notion of men and things, Louis XVIII. determined to repair to St. Ouen, at the gates of Paris, where he would make a last and short stay before entering Paris itself. He decided with his brother and the members of the provisional government that by publishing a general declaration, announcing the guaranteed constitutional principles, they would satisfy the Senate, who would visit the king, and thus the affair would be finished three weeks before those men, who wished to procure France solid liberty under the ancient dynasty, would have been able, by the assistance of Alexander, to deny admittance to Louis XVIII. until he promised all that was demanded. But the excitement had become so great within a few days, that it could not be allayed; and had the attempt been made, it would seem as if the assistance of foreigners had been sought in order to stop a national movement. France, indeed, having first hesitated whether she would recall the Bourbons, then saw that they were her only resource; and the necessity once admitted, the sensibility of some, and the sordidness of others, had given an impulse to the public mind, unexampled since the taking of the Bastille and the return of General Bonaparte from Egypt. The Senate, which had grown weak by continual concessions, was losing ground every day; but if the Senate was conquered in what regarded its own interests, it was not vanquished in the principles which it had undertaken to support. The Senate

had demanded a constitution, and a constitution was about to be granted with the essential clauses. But the Senate did not succeed in making the constitution the result of a combined act of the nation and the king, which would have given the constitution a strength and inviolability that might have secured its duration; and in this respect the Bourbons lost their cause when they believed they had secured its triumph, for they established the ascendency of this principle of *octroi royal*, of which the results at a future day were a *coup d'état* and their own downfall.

It was decided that they should confine themselves to a simple general declaration, and all the Count d'Artois' assistants were set to work—M. de Vitrolles, his chief instrument, as well as MM. de la Maisonfort and Terrier de Montciel—who formed a second council in the *entresol* of the Tuileries. The king, who disdained such literature, did not interfere, but depended on M. de Blacas to superintend and revise their work. The question for these many editors was to know what part should be accorded to the Senate, what amount of gratitude should be shown to that body, and how far, whilst carrying out their own wishes, they might seem to comply with the desires of the Senate. It was agreed that these questions should be definitely arranged at St. Ouen. The king was overjoyed at the idea of returning to his capital, and abandoned himself to the pleasure of inhaling once more that royal incense which had not been burned before him for so many years, and of which he now received an inordinate measure. He set out for St. Ouen, where he arrived on the 1st of May. At this, the last station of his route, the influx of visitors overflowed again, and filled the royal dwelling. The Senate had not yet appeared in the presence of Louis XVIII. But it was necessary to put an end to the separation between the king and that constituent body which had recalled the Bourbons, from whose hands the Count d'Artois had received the lieutenant-generalship, and which, though detested and even despised, nobody dared dissolve or annul, for the Senate was supported by the high officers of the State, by the army, and the allied sovereigns. But as it had been decided that there should be a constitution, that this constitution should emanate from the royal authority, and that the Senate should compose in great part the upper chamber, there was no reason why the Senate should hold back any longer. The senators therefore consented to visit the king, and M. de Talleyrand presented them to Louis XVIII. at St. Ouen, as he had presented them to the Count d'Artois at the Tuileries. M. de Talleyrand's discourse, carefully drawn up, expressed the current ideas of the day. It was no longer the Senate, he said, but the entire nation, enlightened by experience, that came to meet the king and recall him to the

throne of his ancestors. The Senate, sharing the sentiments of the nation, came at the same time to salute the monarch. He, on his side, guided by his wisdom, was about to grant institutions conformable to the wants of modern reason. A constitutional charter would unite the interests of all parties with those of the throne, and strengthen the royal will by the adhesion of the nation's will. The king knew better than any one that such institutions, long and happily tried in a neighbouring nation, offered a support and not an obstacle to those monarchs who based their authority on the law of the land, and were fathers to their people.

To this discourse the king made a gracious reply, which contained a full assent to the sentiments expressed by the president of the Senate. Strange to say, the members of the legislative corps, whose conduct in these circumstances, dictated by a puerile jealousy, was far from honourable, and very injurious to the public cause, wished to present themselves a second time before the king, though they had already paid him their respects at Compiègne. They repeated the commonplaces of the day, and after them the principal bodies of the State would needs recommence defiling and haranguing. The 2nd May was appointed for receptions, and but little time remained for serious business. The declaration that was to precede the king's entry into Paris, and which was, in reality, the condition of this entry, was not even drawn up on the evening of the 2nd, or to speak more correctly, it was overdone, for there were five or six drafts, one drawn up by M. de Vitrolles, another by M. de la Maisonfort, besides several others. The king, weary, and caring little about the terms in which he should be made say what had been agreed on several days before, ordered M. de Blacas to see to the definite arrangement of this declaration that was to be published the following day. M. de Blacas assembled the different compilers, passed a part of the night of the 2nd-3rd May with them, gave audience to some advisers, each of whom brought a phrase or an idea, took care to dismiss the greater number of them, and then, having softened down those sentences which seemed to express too much gratitude to the Senate, or too much dependence on that body, he decided on the form of the declaration. M. de Vitrolles, who was the principal compiler, having asked if it should not be submitted to the king, M. de Blacas replied that it was not necessary to disturb the monarch, who had much need of repose on the eve of such a day as the approaching, and the original of the celebrated declaration of St. Ouen was dated 2nd May, sent to the king's printer, and in the morning a large number of copies was issued.

The following is the preamble to this declaration:

"Recalled by the love of our people to the throne of our

fathers, enlightened by the misfortunes of the nation that we are destined to govern, our first thought is to invoke that mutual confidence so necessary to our repose, and to the happiness of our people.

"Having read attentively the plan of the constitution proposed by the Senate at its meeting of the 6th of last April, we find the fundamental principles of this constitution excellent, but many of the articles bear the impress of the haste with which they were drawn up, and cannot, in their present form, become fundamental laws of the State.

"Being resolved to adopt a liberal constitution, desirous that it should be the result of mature deliberation, wishing that it should be wisely compiled, and not wishing to accept one that would require revision, we summon for the 10th of the month of June of the present year the Senate and legislative corps, before whom we pledge ourselves to lay the result of our labours, assisted by a commission selected from these two bodies, and to lay down as bases of this constitution the following guarantees."

After this preamble, the guarantees, which had never varied, were enumerated. Two chambers voting on all affairs of State; responsible ministers bound to appear before these chambers; personal liberty; liberty of the press; liberty of conscience; taxation by vote; the eligibility of Frenchmen of every rank to civil and military employments; the permanency of judges; the confirmation of the national sales; the support of the Legion of Honour, &c. With the exception of the fundamental question of its origin, which made the constitutional charter a concession and not a contract, the promise to give it such as was desired was formal; and besides, it was made to the Senate, which heightened the importance and authority of this body, and assured the adoption of the most desired resolutions, with one exception, which we repeat the Bourbons ought to have been less inclined to reject than any other, for well would it have been for them had they been bound beyond the possibility of retracting.

Under the auspices of this declaration, Louis XVIII. prepared to make his entry into Paris the 3rd May. He left St. Ouen at eleven in the morning, escorted by an immense crowd that came to meet him. He was in a caleche drawn by eight horses, the Duchess d'Angoulême at his side, and the two princes de Condé on the opposite seat; the Count d'Artois on the right of his carriage, the Duke of Berry on the left, both on horseback. Behind the king's carriage came the marshals, next followed the cavalry of the national guard, commanded by Count Charles de Damas. Whilst this great cortège was passing, every eye was turned on the infantry of the imperial

guard, of which some companies had guarded the king at Compiègne, had followed him to St. Ouen, and now escorted him to Paris. The public contemplated with extreme curiosity those manly faces, tanned by twenty-five years' warfare, assisting respectfully at a ceremony opposed to their inclinations, neither joyous nor excited like their marshals, but haughty, though submissive to the desires of France, whose destinies were now being changed. Amidst the ardent and unanimous cries of *Vive le roi!* there was frequently heard *Vive la garde!* an expressive cry that proved the sympathy of all present for these noble relics of our heroic wars. Even the more rational of the royalists admired their attitude, at once proud and resigned.*

Louis XVIII. was received with enthusiasm. Those deep-seated emotions, the offspring of memory, which the Bourbons possessed the gift of awakening, were perhaps stronger when the Count d'Artois made his entrance into Paris, because the people then felt those emotions for the first time. But reflection told all minds that nothing better could be done than to recall the Bourbons, and that with them alone could peace and a moderate government be expected. This was also become the opinion of the middle classes, dispassionate and disinterested judges of the questions of government. They had a particularly good opinion of the king, who had gained an undisputed reputation for wisdom by his prudent conduct during the emigration; the middle classes were very well disposed; and possessing great influence with the populace, who are naturally imitative, they caused Louis XVIII. to be loudly applauded, by applauding him themselves. The king's figure was concealed by the carriage, and his noble countenance, rendered more gracious by content, was alone visible, and gave pleasure to all beholders. The desire of peace being universal, no one regretted that the king, now called to the throne, was unable to manage a horse, and the public imagination dwelt with pleasure on the oft-sketched image of an aged father returning to the bosom of his family. The Duchess d'Angoulême, whose usually severe countenance was several times this day bathed in tears, and the princes of Condé, whose misfortunes were present to every mind, excited general interest. This carriage, which contained the entire Bourbon family, was accompanied by the most respectful acclamations until it arrived at Nôtre Dame. After the religious ceremony the carriage turned towards the Tuileries by the Pont Neuf, where a statue in plaster of Henry IV. had been raised, and at this spot all present hastened to the assistance of the Duchess

* Many writers, and M. de Chateaubriand in particular, who in general troubles himself very little about the truth, have spoken of the deportment of the guards in exaggerated terms. According to the most creditable witnesses, they behaved exactly as we have endeavoured to describe, coldly but submissively.

d'Angoulême, who fainted at the sight of this palace, which her parents had left to go to the temple and from the temple to the scaffold. At this affecting scene every heart was moved. Brought back in this fashion to the palace of their fathers, this august family might with good reason believe themselves definitely established within its walls. And that it should be so only one thing was necessary—that in entering the Tuileries the Bourbons had participated in the advanced intelligence of the age and the enlightenment of the country over which they were come to reign! It was to be desired both for them and for France. But at this very moment these unfortunate emigrants gave a new proof of the difficulty of reconciling them with this France, of which they had seen little during twenty years, and studied still less. The grenadiers of the imperial guard, who had attended the king both at Compiègne and St. Ouen, and who had no other thought than to fulfil their duty to him, were placed as sentinels round the Tuileries. When the courtiers, both men and women, learned to whom their safety, and above all, that of the royal family, was confided, they were seized with terror. They had recourse to M. Dupont, the minister of war, and asked him if he had lost his reason, when he dared to trust the precious existence of the king to such hands? The general, accustomed to the fidelity of the French soldiers under arms, scarcely understood what they meant. He was at first tempted to laugh at such fears, but they recalled him to what they called the importance of the affair, and that very evening, without any consideration for these brave soldiers, who, though their hearts were full of Napoleon, would still have defended Louis XVIII. against all comers, he was forced to dismiss them, and insultingly send them to their barracks. And these were the hearts that were to be united, that were to be fused in love for the same dynasty.*

Next day the different bodies of the State recommenced their visits to the royal family, always repeating the same speeches; then the allied troops defiled before Louis XVIII., seated on the balcony of his palace, and surrounded by the principal sovereigns of Europe, who courteously yielded the first place to him, wishing thereby to prove to France how much they esteemed both her king and herself.

Some time having been devoted to ceremonies and congratulations, the moment was now come to commence the laborious work of reconciling the past and present, of giving some compensation to the classes injured by a long proscription, without, however, offending the nation, that would not consent to be sacrificed to any private interest; seeking truth and justice

* I only repeat in this place, in other words, the very sentiments which General Dupont expresses in his manuscript memoirs.

through a space of twenty-five years filled with bloody quarrels, and from these to construct a system of government; a very difficult task, and almost impossible, unless a clear and firm intellect should be found in the king, or one of the princes of his family, or in some minister capable of obtaining a decisive ascendency over the court and government! Could this phenomenon be found? This was the question, and a very obscure one.

Under the short rule of the Count d'Artois the government had only had a provisional character, and the ministers had merely borne the title of commissioners of the different ministerial departments. It was now necessary to form a definite ministry. Louis XVIII., taking things as he found them, continued the separation which had existed under the Count d'Artois between the royal council, aiding the prince with its advice, and the ministers, executing his wishes, some ministers being permanent members of this council, and others only summoned to it for the special affairs of their departments. It was a strange combination, and very little suited to the government that was about to be given to France.

In order that a free State, formed upon the principle of deliberative assemblies, should possess that unity of will without which promptitude and vigour of action would be impossible, and that clearness of perception which can only result from the co-operation of many minds, it is necessary that the ministers trusted with the governing power under the crown and the chambers should be the sole councillors of the crown, that they should concoct the resolutions of government, get them sanctioned by the king and the chambers, and then have them executed on their own responsibility, both collective and individual. It would also be necessary, before bringing the great powers of the State to this desirable state of unity, that the ministers themselves should be united by the influence of one amongst them, superior to the others in intelligence, temper, and position. It is under such conditions alone that all the intelligence of a country can be united for the common good, which is the privilege of free States, and at the same time preserve that unity of action which seems to be the privilege of absolute governments, but which enjoy this advantage only in appearance, for such governments are frequently the most unstable. Between the crown and the deliberative bodies there must, therefore, be no other intermediaries than the ministers alone, who are at once the authors, demonstrators, and executors, on their own responsibility, of the different acts that constitute the administrative authority. All additional machinery is useless, and consequently hurtful. But in 1814 experience had not yet taught us anything on these important subjects, and even in England people acted more from instinct

than reflection. Free government was a science existing in England practically, but theoretically nowhere.

The king simply accepted the legacy of circumstances—that is, the superior royal council, which was only, as we have seen, the old provisional government transformed into the council of the lieutenant-general, and under it the ministers, some being members of the council and some not. He confined himself to making definite appointments to each department by continuing in office the actual possessors of portfolios, or by changing them as circumstances arose. The following were his selection.

No one would wish to remove M. Louis from the finance department, where, in a few days, he had gained universal confidence. He was named minister of this department. General Dupont, who was well acquainted with the army, and did all in his power to satisfy the feelings of the military, but unfortunately possessed of less firmness than intelligence, and who had with difficulty preserved his presence of mind in the midst of conflicting pretensions, but who had not yet lost the prestige of his long disgrace, was confirmed in the post of minister of war. M. de Malouet, an honest, laborious man, retained his office as marine minister. MM. de Talleyrand and de Montesquiou were summoned to the ministry, however, without losing their places in the council. Although M. de Laforest was minister of foreign affairs, it was M. de Talleyrand alone who had directed the negotiation of the armistice, and he was the only person that could arrange the conditions of a definite peace. He became titular minister of foreign affairs, whilst, next to the princes of the blood, he was the most important member of the superior royal council, which from custom was now called the "upper council."

Although M. de Montesquiou was a clergyman, he did not wish to be either cardinal or ambassador to the Holy See; he wished to be minister in France, and chief minister. He willingly resigned the foreign policy, which, on account of the peace, he believed would be, for a long time, very unimportant, and which also belonged of right to M. de Talleyrand, and reserved himself for the home policy, which was about to become very active, very difficult, and very stormy. He possessed more than one advantage for this department. He exercised a certain authority over his own party, and could be as arrogant to his colleagues as to others; he was accustomed to public life, and spoke with ease. But he was irritable, and did not possess sufficient vigour either of mind or character and was quite unequal to the burden he was about to assume—a burden which would have been indeed too heavy for anybody. But the royalist party had not at this time a better

candidate to offer to the king, so that the choice of the minister for the home department was, under the circumstances, the best that could be made. M. Beugnot, who had temporarily administered the home department, was compensated with the command of the police, under the title of "director-general," an office almost equivalent to a place in the ministry.

M. Henrion de Pansey, notwithstanding the excellence of his character, lost his appointment of chancellor. It was desirable that a man who had belonged to the ancient parliaments should be at the head of the magistracy, and a magistrate was chosen who possessed the learning, and somewhat of the studied eloquence of d'Aguesseau, and who, endowed at the same time with a mild temper and honourable principles, entertained all the opinions of the old royalists. This magistrate was M. Dambray. Lastly, it would be impolitic to exclude from the official members of the government a person who possessed so much influence at court as M. de Blacas, and the ministers, desirous of associating him with themselves, offered him the control of the royal household. M. de Blacas had just been appointed grand master of the bedchamber, the only important office that was vacant at court, for all the others had been given to their old possessors. Vain of this distinguished favour, he thought it would be a degradation to enter the ministry. It was only by great efforts that he could be induced to yield. Great efforts were made, and he was prevailed on to accept a portfolio, which leaving him near the king's person without imposing on him any portion of the burden of public affairs, yet united him in the collective responsibility of the ministry.

The Count d'Artois had admitted M. de Vitrolles into the council with the title of secretary of State. A secretary of State, placed between the sovereign and his ministers, in order to transmit to them the orders of a master who never took counsel but of himself, ought to have passed away with Napoleon. In the new order of things this post should have fallen to the lot of M. de Blacas, and would have been an impossibility even for him. In fact, the ministers had determined to communicate directly with the king, and had already refused to accept the intervention of M. de Vitrolles with the Count d'Artois, which, indeed, was only natural, since they were the responsible authors of their own acts. But one function, therefore, remained to the new secretary of State, that of keeping a registry of the meetings of the council. The members of the council would not on any account sanction this registry. M. de Montesquiou and M. de Talleyrand said, with justice, that a registry would restrain the freedom of debate, for the certainty of having all they said noted down, whether correctly or not, would prevent the most

sincere and the most courageous members of the government from speaking with perfect frankness. Therefore, there being no longer any intermediary between the ministers and the king, and not being allowed to keep a register, the secretary of State had no duties to perform. His colleagues did what they could to exclude M. de Vitrolles from the royal council, and to compensate him by a post at court. But he was obstinate, and being supported by the princes, remained in the council, where his only employment was to take notes of the adopted resolutions, and to correspond with the *Moniteur* or the *Telegraph*. So he remained, little liked by his colleagues, liking them still less, at open enmity with M. de Montesquiou, who was not sparing of arrogance towards a person whose rank he despised, whose merit he did not recognise, and whose services he denied.*

To these personages was added, with the title of minister of State in charge of the post-office, M. Ferrand, a well-informed old man, and a not very skilful writer, endowed with all the obstinacy and the vehemence of the ultra-royalists. He was in the administration of the post-office what M. Beugnot was in the police—a director-general, with almost ministerial rank.

Such was the cabinet of Louis XVIII., if an assemblage of ministers can be called a cabinet, in which M. de Talleyrand, the most important by his position, was allowed to occupy himself only with foreign affairs, where M. de Montesquiou, the next in importance, was obliged to give his entire attention to affairs connected with the chambers, and M. de Blacas, the third in rank, was allowed to interfere solely in business brought immediately under the king's notice—a cabinet, in which each minister acted almost isolated, not being united by a prime minister, for no such person existed; nor by the superior royal council, which had no leader; for a literary king, indolent and solely occupied with classic reading, could not be considered as a head. There was reason to fear that this ministerial chaos, unguided by any governing power, would be led by the passions of the times, which were very irrational, very exacting, and very unsettled.

On the second day after his entry into Paris the king assembled the royal council, to which, on this occasion, all the ministers were summoned, besides the princes, who were amongst its habitual members. The king addressed the council in an opening speech, which was studied, polite, and affectionate. He spoke in a clear voice, with effect, though haughtily, touching

* M. de Vitrolles kept, nevertheless, some sort of register of the meetings of the council, very short, but very interesting, and which is still preserved in the archives of the State, and is perhaps one of the most curious documents we possess concerning the government of the first Restoration.

rather superficially on every subject, wishing that, on the first day, a word at least should be said about everything. He enumerated the different objects that were to be provided for; the army, which should be reorganised and attached to the present dynasty; the navy, which should be remodelled, and proportioned to our financial resources; the old military establishment of the king, which was to be again set on foot; the finances, which should be the measure of what could be done for the army and navy; the taxes, which must be maintained and collected in spite of imprudent promises; the sufferings of the occupied provinces, to which a speedy end must be put; the negotiations, which it was important should end in a definite but not humiliating peace; and lastly, the constitution, which was promised for the 10th of June at the latest.

The task with regard to the army was most difficult. It was in the first place necessary to decide on the principle of recruiting, and come to a rational resolution, considering the pledge the princes had made to abolish conscription. Besides, notwithstanding the number of desertions, the difficulty was not in the want of men, but, on the contrary, in their too great number, and in the sentiments they expressed. A hundred and fifty thousand men were about to return from England, Russia, Germany, and Spain, and about as many prisoners, all old soldiers. There would be consequently four hundred thousand men at least, and more than forty thousand officers, for all of whom provision should be made. The minister of finance declared that when the State debts should be paid he would not have more than two hundred millions of francs to devote to the army—that is to say, that he had scarcely sufficient to pay half the claims that would be made on him. As to the navy, Napoleon's hundred vessels must be given up, for if this number was too great when the empire extended from Lübeck to Trieste, and when France had double the number of sailors, it would be ridiculous when France would be reduced to the frontiers of 1790.

Some words were exchanged on these serious subjects. The minister of war was requested to produce a plan of organisation which would as far as possible satisfy all interests, by conforming to the temporary financial distress. The minister of marine was authorised to prepare large reductions, for a long peace with England was reckoned on, and it was not desirable to offend this power by an expensive and useless display of naval force. The king, who was very sensitive to externals, desired that the names of several vessels which recalled revolutionary memories should be changed, whilst those of Austerlitz and Friedland, for example, which only spoke of victory, should be retained. Lastly, he questioned the minister

of finance, who did not hesitate to explain again his irrevocable intentions. At first he wished to lay it down as a principle, that all the State debts should be paid, even those that were called "Bonaparte's debts," and which unfortunately had been contracted to support unwise wars. Whether the money were well or ill employed, these debts had been contracted on the credit of France, and it would have been as scandalous as impossible to deny them. Without this scrupulous exactness in fulfilling the engagements of the treasury there would be no public credit, and without credit, whatever system may be adopted, the taxes being insufficient for several years, it would not be possible to satisfy the most pressing wants of the State. But with credit it would be possible, provided that the proper means were adopted to obtain it. But as credit would not suffice for everything, it would be necessary also to require the exact payment of the taxes. The city of Bordeaux, in calling itself the *City of the Twelfth of March*, signified an intention not to pay the *droits réunis;* and the other cities of the south, encouraged by this example, adopted the like resolution. If the king, now that he was at the head of the government, did not address the southern populations with great firmness, all help from the taxes, and consequently all public credit, would disappear. So spoke the minister.

The Count d'Artois reminded him that a promise had been given to abolish the *droits réunis.* "You made another promise," replied M. Louis, "that the public debts should be paid, and this promise is much more important than the other."

The king, always glad of an opportunity to make his nephews, and still more his brother, appear to be in the wrong, fully agreed with M. Louis; he declared that without depriving the people, who had been led away by thoughtless promises, of all hope of amelioration, he intended to address a proclamation to them, recalling them to their duty, and reminding them that taxation, like law, was to be the same for all, and that good intentions, however excellent they may be, would not suffice to pay the expenses of the State. It was decided that this proclamation should be immediately drawn up, signed by the king, and published.

The ministers of finance, of war, and of the navy having spoken together for a few moments, it was evident that economy should be the inflexible law of the new government, for without economy it would be impossible to meet the various demands of the different government departments, and above all, to satisfy the army, whose good-will it was all-important to gain. This was no time to think of expense or luxury, or of any project not demanded by absolute necessity. And still Louis XVIII. spoke in the simplest and most decided manner of the ancient

military household of the king as of an institution definitely re-established. "Already," he said, "the ancient officers of the body-guards have resumed their titles." These were MM. d'Havré, de Grammont, de Poix, and de Luxembourg. But this was not enough; he also wished to increase the number of companies, in order to appoint two new officers, chosen from the imperial army. And he was desirous of re-establishing the red companies. His determination was fixed, for it was, in his opinion, for want of a sufficient military household that royalty, and France with her, had suffered so many misfortunes in 1789.

To understand how imprudent it was to re-establish this ancient military household, it must be explained that under the name of *red companies* it was meant to assemble two or three thousand gentlemen, some very old, and others mere boys, not deficient in courage if an occasion called for it, but wholly unfit for effective military service; they were all to have magnificent uniforms, and a rank not lower than that of captain. Besides these, there were to be assembled, under the name of body-guards, three thousand young men, who should have the rank of cornets, and to whom were to be added artillery and infantry to the number of four thousand, which would make altogether about ten thousand men, costing as much as forty or fifty thousand, at a moment when it would be perhaps necessary to disband two hundred thousand soldiers and thirty thousand veteran officers, covered with wounds, and doomed to sink into misery. The king's household, thus constituted, could not cost less than twenty million francs; and should the Civil List pay a part, it would be a great imprudence to divert such a sum from the war budget, and give the army, little disposed as it was to interpret favourably the diminution it was about to undergo, an opportunity of comparing its misery with the opulence of the king's household troops. Louis XVIII. distinctly declared that the imperial guard should meet the highest consideration; but how were all these things to be conciliated? how were all these expenses to be met?

We may see from this that the Bourbon princes returned with resolutions ready formed on the most important subjects. They wished in the present instance to furnish employment to poor gentlemen (the only specious excuse for the proceeding), and they actually believed that six thousand gentlemen, well armed, could have checked the French Revolution, an opinion indeed which they were not singular in professing. This august family was destined soon to experience what resistance could be made against a revolution with even the bravest gentlemen! No member of the council dared to raise an objection to a resolution apparently irrevocable. Even the

minister of finance was silent. He gave what money he could, employing all his energy to avoid giving more; and as to how it should be employed, he left that to the consideration of the minister of war, who was more interested in the question than he. The latter would take good care not to quarrel with the French nobility, who were willing in this fashion to resume the profession of arms. M. de Talleyrand and M. de Montesquiou possessed sufficient power to render them fearless of the nobility, but the former wished to win their good opinion, and the latter agreed with him on this occasion, so that no opposition was offered to a measure destined to be fatal to the Bourbon dynasty. As a proof of his solicitude for the army, and of the attention with which its interests would be guarded, the king announced that he would form a superior council of war, composed of the princes, of several marshals, and of some of the most distinguished lieutenants-general of each service. He added that he would himself preside.

The sufferings of the occupied provinces were then spoken of. It was already evident that the convention of the 23rd April was a deception. The foreign troops that were to have retired in proportion as we evacuated the fortresses had not even moved. The heads of the armies intended to sell for their own advantage the matériel deposited in the magazines and arsenals of which they had taken possession. They even carried their pretensions so far as to lay claim to the salt magazines, and attempted to cut down the woods for their private benefit, and in the disputes resulting from these pretensions sought a fresh motive for delaying their departure. The sacrifices that had been made in evacuating so many distant posts of the highest importance met with no compensation, and the immediate relief that had been hoped from the convention of the 23rd of April was found to be an illusion.

The king expressed himself very warmly on this subject, and the Duke de Berry, who was always excitable, said that France should not be devastated in this manner on unfounded pretexts, Napoleon having already gone to Elba, and all the commanders of the French army having submitted to the new order of things. M. de Talleyrand was ordered to speak on this subject with the sovereigns and their ministers, and to express himself in the most decided manner. He was also desired to introduce the important subject of peace; and as to the constitution, the king, as we have already remarked, said nothing, or almost nothing. But it was of the first importance to fulfil the pledges made to the Senate and the legislative corps that were summoned to meet on the 10th of June. The allied sovereigns, on their part, showed a desire to leave France, recalled to their dominions by their own affairs, and also

desirous to obtain their share of the spoils of the great empire. They were consequently anxious for the speedy conclusion of the peace; and they often insinuated—Alexander more than the others—that they should not consider their obligations towards France fulfilled, and particularly towards those who had rid them of Napoleon, until the question of the constitution should be decided. Influenced by these different reasons, Louis XVIII. declared his intention of anticipating the day appointed for the convocation of the Senate and the legislative corps; consequently the 31st May was substituted for the 10th June—a change which necessitated greater expedition in drawing up a sketch of the new constitution.

During this preliminary examination of the great affairs of State, Louis XVIII. appeared to his councillors to be dignified, affable, and perhaps a little superficial to those who, like M. de Talleyrand, M. Louis, and General Dessoles, were capable of seeing beyond the surface. However, the members of the council were satisfied, and according to custom, affected to be still more so than they really were.

Every subject entered upon was of importance. M. de Talleyrand having learned from the minister of the interior the horrible exactions practised in our provinces, introduced the subject to the allied monarchs and their ministers. To produce the treaty of the 23rd April was sufficient to prove them in the wrong; for it had been decided that from the date of this convention all exactions should cease, that the allied troops should commence their retreat, and that the territories through which they marched should alone be obliged to furnish them provisions during their passage. Although the articles of the convention might in the execution give rise to abuses, still the exactions that had been made were exorbitant, and so odious, that no excuse could be offered for them. Alexander appeared to be sincerely indignant at what he heard, and declared that he had given orders, and that he would now renew them. The King of Prussia, being niggardly and desirous of small profits for his army, was really embarrassed, but promised to issue fresh instructions. Prince Schwarzenberg's language was satisfactory, but his sincerity doubtful. M. de Talleyrand said to the allied ministers that since all admitted the injustice of what was going on, no one could take it amiss if the king, in a proclamation addressed to his subjects, should advise them to resist the exactions daily committed, both by levies in kind and by the sale of property belonging to the State. The ministers did not dare to object, for that would be to acknowledge themselves the accomplices of their subordinates, and a proclamation was drawn up upon the spot, conformable to the truths that had been admitted, and sent to the royal council. There was at the same

time laid before the council the proclamation concerning the collection of the *droits réunis*—an affair always of great difficulty, as we have said, in the southern provinces.

The proclamation intended for the occupied provinces cited the convention of the 23rd April, of which the intention had been to allow France to enjoy an anticipated peace. In the proclamation the inhabitants of these provinces were called upon to fulfil faithfully the conditions of this convention, and consequently to treat the allied armies well, and supply them during their retreat with whatever they might need.

But the proclamation reminded the people of the promises made to France not to make any further war levies, to respect public and private property, and enjoined them to refuse compliance with every illegal demand, and forbade them to purchase articles offered for sale by the foreign armies, such as wood, salt, or furniture, declaring beforehand that all such sales were illegal and void. The precaution was a good one, for, taking wood as an example, as its cutting down and removal would require several months, the declaration of the nullity of the sale would prevent purchasers from presenting themselves, seeing that they would be certain not to obtain what they should have paid for. It is sad to think that such measures were necessary to prevent the French from assisting in the spoliation of the land; but since the mournful necessity existed, we repeat, that the precaution was well devised. Besides, it was couched in firm and dignified language, which was not at all calculated to offend the allied sovereigns, however severe upon their generals.

The proclamation was adopted and published immediately. The motion concerning the *droits réunis* was less unanimously supported, and met with much opposition from the princes. In treating this subject, the promises made by the Count d'Artois and his sons always presented a difficulty. This prince returned to the charge, reminded the ministers of the promises made to the people, and alleged the excellent dispositions of the refractory provinces. But these remarks had no effect on M. Louis, who said that in financial matters the best disposed were those who paid the taxes punctually, and that it was an indispensable necessity that all should submit to the laws, otherwise he should be obliged to retire, and leave his place to those who would undertake to govern in the midst of such anarchy. The king, annoyed at constantly hearing of the promises made by his brother and nephews, and weary of a royalism that manifested itself by refusing to pay the taxes, said that the Vendeans were as much royalists as the Bordelais, and that notwithstanding they paid the public dues. Had the king been better informed, he would have known that the Vendeans behaved no better with regard to the duty on salt than the

Bordelais with regard to that on wines. However, the argument was good with respect to others, if not to the Vendeans, and the minister of finance, supported by the king and his colleagues, carried the proclamation in dispute; it was published with that intended for the invaded provinces.

In this proclamation, the king, addressing himself to the wine-growing provinces, said that, like Henry IV. and Louis XII., he wished to be called the father of his people, and to be able to suppress all burdensome imposts; but that the present taxes, which had been much ameliorated, were indispensable, until some means should be devised to replace or suppress them; that a sacred duty was to be fulfilled towards the creditors of the State and towards the army, which could not be done if the finances became disorganised; besides, it was necessary to give an example of respect for the laws, if they did not wish to fall into a frightful state of anarchy; he hoped that his subjects in the southern provinces, who every day bestowed on him lavish expressions of their affection, would now give an effective proof of it, by submitting to a necessity, whose duration he would endeavour to abridge; that he would rather warn than correct, but that if, having admonished, his voice were not attended to, he should be obliged to punish, and he would do so, to prevent the disorganisation of the finances, the destruction of the laws, and the ruin of the State.

These two proclamations were, indeed, only words, but it was useful that they should be heard, especially from the lips of the head of the house of Bourbon. The foreign generals would be less audacious in their exactions, and compelled to greater precaution, now that their acts were disclaimed by their sovereigns, and by the Bourbons, their allies, besides being exposed to meet with greater opposition from the people. As to the refractory provinces, the affectionate language of the monarch was certainly not capable of converting them, but the resolution, so decidedly expressed concerning the execution of the laws, would give the authorities a moral force which up to this moment they had not possessed, and would also hasten the time when the taxes might be again collected.

The next objects to be considered were the peace and the constitution, in order to place France in a proper and definite position, externally with regard to Europe, and internally with respect to herself.

M. de Talleyrand was naturally the principal agent of the government in the important negotiation concerning the peace, and the task was not an easy one, even for him. A great deal had been said on this subject in the conversation of each day, but no positive decision had been come to. But there were two descriptions of questions to be decided—those which concerned

France in particular, and those which concerned all Europe. Thus, although the principal belligerent powers were decided as to what they wished for, and tacitly determined to let each satisfy itself; although England, as was well known, had resolved to claim Belgium, in order to join it to Holland, and thus create an important monarchy, which would remove us from the mouths of large rivers; although Austria, independently of Italy, also desired a portion of the banks of the Rhine to give Bavaria in exchange for the Tyrol; although Russia and Prussia desired to have Poland and Saxony to share amongst themselves; and that these motives decided all four to deprive us of the Rhine frontier, in order that these different arrangements might be practicable, still, even in permitting each other to effect these different spoliations, there still remained so many subordinate questions to be determined, both as to the extent of the partitions and the combinations to be adopted, in order to establish in some sort a European equilibrium, so that the lesser States should not be sacrificed to the greater, that the decision was not easy, and there was no certainty of obtaining it but after long and painful efforts. It was seen at a glance, that without supposing sittings so protracted as those of the Congress of Westphalia (which had continued several years), it would require some months to conciliate all these interests, and the allied sovereigns did not wish to pass these months in Paris. There was another reason why these numerous questions should not be debated in Paris, and this was that France should not be afforded an opportunity of taking part in the discussion. However desirous the allies might be of agreeing, they were almost certain of not doing so, and consequently of quarrelling more than once before arriving at a definite resolution, and they did not wish to give France the immense advantage of being present at the disputes. Besides being a moral triumph, it would offer her an opportunity of recovering with ease a strong position, by uniting herself to one party against the other, and so making powerful alliances. Although the other powers pretended that France should be better treated than she was at Chatillon, in point of fact, they cared little about how she was treated, and under the Bourbons as well as under Napoleon, it was determined to reduce her to her ancient limits, and as far as possible exclude her from the great European arrangements. There was less to irritate under the Bourbons, but there was also less of the fear that Napoleon inspired, and the one almost compensated for the other. M. de Metternich had since his arrival again taken the chief part in the negotiations, and thanks to his profound and redoubtable sagacity, he said that it was necessary first to arrange relations with us, and that there would be afterwards less difficulty

in arranging the relations of the European States amongst themselves.

This subtle thought soon penetrated the minds of the allied sovereigns, and they decided to conclude their arrangements with France at Paris, and reserve for a congress which should be held in one of the great capitals of the continent, the general arrangements which should constitute the new balance of power in Europe. Austria was treated at this period with great deference, because she had secured the general safety by joining the coalition, spite of her natural repugnance and the ties of blood, and it was decided that the future congress should be held at Vienna.

The foregoing arrangements being communicated to the French negotiators, met with no opposition from them. At first view they appeared simple and free from guile, for it was of the first importance to put an end to the war, and consequently to treat first with France, against whom arms had been taken up. No opposition could be offered to the project of submitting the numerous questions, to which the new order of things would give rise in Europe, to a future assembly to be held in a central capital after the different monarchs should have had time to return to their dominions, and arrange their most pressing affairs, and thus be more at liberty to give the necessary attention to those definite arrangements which interested the entire world. It would have been difficult to make any objection to so specious a plan, and one so apparently well founded. In fact, nothing was objected, for on our part we were anxious to enjoy the honour of having concluded a peace, which would furnish so happy a contrast between the government of the Bourbons and that of Napoleon.

These resolutions were consequently adopted, and it was arranged that all things concerning France should be first and immediately decided. The frontier question was the first, and beyond all comparison the most important. We had often been told that France would be treated very differently under the Bourbons to what she was under the Bonapartes. More was done than saying this—it had been written, and a number of proclamations had been filled with this promise. Afterwards, in the conversations to which the conventions of the 23rd April had given occasion, there had been mention, but in a very vague manner, and without any definite engagement, of adding a million subjects in addition to our territorial possessions of 1790. As to the principle of the frontiers of 1790, it had never been altered either directly or indirectly, and no negotiator in the world, except it had been Napoleon himself flushed with victory, could have obtained a concession on this point. In fact, on this depended the creation of the kingdom

of the Low Countries, so anxiously desired by England, the restitution of the Tyrol and Italy for Austria, the acquisition of Poland for Russia, and of Saxony for Prussia, since it would have been impossible to accomplish these projects without depriving us of the left bank of the Rhine. It would therefore have been unreasonable to try to change this resolution. It would be uselessly exerting a tenacity of disposition which could be better employed elsewhere. Consequently, good care was taken not to dispute a point so decided, and every effort was directed to the manner of defining the frontier of 1790, of which we had been solemnly promised an improvement.

M. de Talleyrand had received certain instructions in full royal council. He had been recommended most particularly to try and obtain the million subjects on the north side of France, and not on the south-east—that is, in Savoy. The house of Savoy, which was about being restored at the same time as the house of Bourbon, was united to Louis XVIII. by the bonds of blood and friendship, and it would be repugnant to his feelings to share in its spoils. Let us add that our ancient frontier needed much more to be strengthened to the north than to the south. M. de Talleyrand was also desired to require the entire restoration of our colonies, and not to consent to any contribution for the expenses of the war.

The idea of obtaining the promised augmentation to the north instead of the south, although inspired by family reason, was very wise. It would be possible, indeed, without exceeding the limit marked by a million souls, to improve our frontier considerably, and render it almost as strong as that of the Rhine, though neither so extensive in territory or so formidable to our neighbours. And by extending it a little further, and letting it pass through the following points—Nieuport, Ypres, Courtray, Tournay, Ath, Mons, Namur, Dinant, Givet, Neuchâteau, Arlon Luxemburg, Sarrelouis, Kaisers-Lautern, and Spire—we should have gained a frontier not only more extensive, but more solid, since to the noble enclosure of fortresses that we already possessed we should have joined that of the Belgian fortifications. To the celebrated fortress of Luxemburg we should have added the important position of Kaisers-Lautern in the Vosges, and the fortress of Landau on the Rhine. This would have been a certain compensation for the Rhine frontier, and an immense amelioration with regard to our territorial position in 1790. To obtain such a frontier, it would have been worth while to fight more than one battle.

The two negotiators who assisted M. de Talleyrand in these details—M. de Laforest and M. d'Osmond—had with much intelligence traced this new line upon the map. They proposed it in the first meeting of the negotiators, at which M. de Talleyrand

was not present, as he reserved himself for an interview in which he would bring his personal influence to bear upon the monarchs and the allied ministers. MM. Laforest and d'Osmond supported their case by means of an ably written document. In this document they recounted how it had been publicly and repeatedly promised that France should be left great and strong; that it had been formally said that she should be granted an increase of a million inhabitants; and they asserted, that unless the allied monarchs desired to destroy all equilibrium, they ought not—considering the manner in which all the other European powers had aggrandised themselves since the division of Poland—to condemn France to remain as she had been at the end of the last century.

Hardly had the foreign commissioners heard this memoir read, and cast their eyes upon the map, than they exclaimed against our pretensions, and appeared as much surprised as if the thing had been quite unexpected, and what they could not have foreseen. They had only heard, they said, of the frontiers of 1790; they did not know whether there had ever been mention *de vive voix* of any augmentation whatever; as for them, they now heard of it for the first time, and could find no trace of it in their instructions. The English commissioner alone, entering a little deeper into the subject, showed that the execution of this project would dismember Belgium, which would be contrary to the promises made to the Belgians, that their territories should not be parcelled out and given to different masters. Our negotiators replied that if under the rule of Napoleon the Belgians did not feel much desire to belong to France, on account of the conscription and the *droits réunis*, it would be quite different under the Bourbons; that the feeling of the Belgians was totally changed; and that those who should be left to France would never think of objecting, and that the only objection would be from those who should be given up to Holland—an assertion whose truth was strictly proved, since the Belgians had had the English and German troops amongst them, and had reflected on what would be their fate under a Protestant power. Our adversaries did not reply, and did not advance the only reason which could have had any value, namely, that France would by this means gain the Belgian fortresses in addition to her own, and that the future kingdom of the Low Countries would be without a frontier. Their only defence was an exhibition of profound astonishment, and a declaration that our pretensions were so novel, so unforeseen, that it was impossible to discuss them, nobody being prepared for the subject. It was evidently necessary that the meeting should separate, and each member consult his respective chief.

The French commissioners told M. de Talleyrand of the effect produced by their first proposition, and he immediately determined to confer with those persons, monarchs or ministers, who decided sovereignty on European affairs. Promises had indeed been made him at the time of the convention of the 23rd April, when there was a question of evacuating the most important fortresses, but vague promises, which, if contested, would give no ground for exclaiming against a breach of faith, the mere mention of which would seem an offence. Besides, deriving all his strength against emigration from the favour of the foreign monarchs, M. de Talleyrand was not sufficiently at his ease to speak to them with that decided energy which would have commanded attention.

M. de Talleyrand had several interviews with Lord Castlereagh, M. de Nesselrode, and M. de Metternich, the three persons who could alone exert any influence in this dispute. Lord Castlereagh represented the power to which Louis XVIII. had expressed the most gratitude, and from which some return might be expected. But there was none. M. de Talleyrand found the English minister plain-spoken and friendly, but obstinate, as the English ever are when their interests are at stake. England wished to found the monarchy of the Low Countries on a firm basis, and this object she hoped to attain by incorporating the entire of Belgium with Holland, and she certainly would not contribute to weaken the former by depriving her of her fortresses. England never forgot the continental blockade, and was most solicitous to cut us off from the seaboard. Besides, without avowing her motive, she wished by this means to compensate Holland for the colonies of which she was preparing to deprive her, especially for the Cape of Good Hope. Lord Castlereagh was consequently immovable, though polite, and spoke in such a manner as not to leave the least hope. An appeal to M. de Nesselrode and M. de Metternich was equally unsuccessful, though neither the one nor the other had the least interest in the affair, for neither Russia nor Austria desired to curtail our possessions in the Low Countries. But M. de Talleyrand saw that M. de Nesselrode took but little interest in the subject, and was an exact reflection of his master's sentiments. The haughtiness of Louis XVIII., and the little desire he showed on different occasions to gratify Russia, above all, the spirit that seemed to animate the Bourbons, were extremely disagreeable to Alexander; for example, whilst Louis XVIII. had been so very eager to offer the *cordon bleu* to the Prince-Regent of England, he had not even thought of offering it to the Emperor of Russia, who was, however, the principal cause of Napoleon's downfall and of the restoration of the Bourbons. Alexander

entertained a warm affection for M. de Caulaincourt, but when he sought, certainly without this noble-minded gentleman's solicitation, to obtain him some share of the royal favour, Louis scarcely listened to the request. There had been some question of uniting the Duke de Berry to the Archduchess Anne, who was to have been married to Napoleon, but the restored family did not appear very anxious for the union, though it was spoken of from time to time. Alexander had consequently become cool, and said frankly to his allies, that he was not certain whether the restoration of the Bourbons was the best service they could have rendered to France and to Europe.

It was evident that no support could be expected from the Russians, and none was obtained. We might have had more hope from the Austrians. If at the new French court it was commonly said, that with all his talent Alexander had not common sense, and that he was too lavish of his advice; on the other hand, great praise was bestowed on the wisdom and reserve of the Emperor of Austria, who was neither a liberal, nor eager to offer advice to those who did not ask it, and moreover, he warmly approved of giving as little liberty as possible to the French. It thus happened that for some time Louis XVIII. had been on better terms with Napoleon's father-in-law than with any other of the allied monarchs. M. de Metternich was mild, friendly, and well disposed towards the Bourbons, whom, he said, ought not to be rendered unpopular. Still, he appeared very much embarrassed. Austria had renewed her union with England, her old and constant friend, and this union had become closer since Russia had acquired such a preponderance. She agreed with her on every point, and expected an unreserved assistance from her in the affairs of Italy. Now, England having formally announced her intention of restricting us to the frontiers of 1790, Austria could not hold a different opinion. M. de Metternich did not deny that his master had no personal reason for refusing us an extension of territory in the direction of Belgium or the Rhenish provinces, but neither did he deny that England's wishes would guide Austria on this point. He did not absolutely deny the promised increase of a million souls, but he said it was only a form of speech, that the million might not have meant more than five hundred thousand, and that in those must be counted Avignon and Montbéliard, which had been added to the territory of 1790; that certainly something might be added towards the north, but, above all, that the augmentation should extend in the direction of Savoy, and that when five hundred thousand souls should have been gained here and there, there was no reason why they should not be reckoned a million; the *amour-propre* of the allies was concerned in the affair, and they would never contradict the French

government, if, in order to make the Bourbons popular, it should be publicly announced that a million inhabitants had been added to the frontiers of 1790.

It was evident that none would support us, for Prussia would either remain neutral or take part against us. She was preparing to introduce the question of money, a point on which she was particularly sensitive, and she did not wish to lose the goodwill of any of her allies by disobliging them. It was evident that nothing was to be hoped from our conquerors, at least for the present.

Nothing now remained but to refer the subject to the king's council, explain the position of affairs, and await further orders. For some time past a universal, and it must be admitted an unjust outcry had been raised against the convention of the 23rd April, by which we had abandoned the greater number of the great European fortresses. In truth, we had made a mistake, and in desiring to put an end to the evils of war we had not shortened the sufferings of the occupied provinces by a single day. But the intention was good, and moreover, universally approved; but that was forgotten now as well by the impartial as by the prejudiced and discontented portion of the public. But what is still stranger, these sentiments had penetrated even into the royal council itself, and when M. de Talleyrand had explained the species of insincerity of which he had to complain, almost everybody blamed the convention of the 23rd of April, which had deprived us of our pledges, as if all had not at that time unanimously concurred in the wisdom of the measure. The Duke de Berry, with his accustomed impetuosity, exclaimed—forgetting that he was blaming his own father—that it was the consequence of the fault committed in so hastily signing the unfortunate armistice. The king looked maliciously at his brother and nephew, and seemed to approve what had been said by the latter. The Duke d'Artois, deeply affected, said that it was easy to talk of the convention then, but that at the time it was signed, the government had done as well as it could, and that those who blamed would not probably have done better in the same circumstances. This prince might have added, that at that time the idea of hastening the evacuation of the country was the dominant thought of every mind, that a single objection had not been made either in the council or elsewhere on the day the convention was signed. He contented himself with exhibiting a profound grief, the grief of a good man, who receives, without returning, an injury, and it became an established opinion that the cause of France had been sacrificed by signing the convention too precipitately and without compensation. M. de Talleyrand, who was the author of the deed, replied to the attack by cold and disdainful silence.

However, those who blamed the convention of the 23rd of

April were about to commit a like fault, that is, a fault of precipitation. Since nothing of what had been promised could be obtained, there remained but one possible resource, which was to appeal to the congress that in a few months should decide the great European questions at Vienna. The armistice was sufficient for the present, because it traced a temporary frontier, that of 1790; it stipulated that all parties should retire without hostilities to these frontiers; it restored us three hundred thousand men who could be held in readiness, and if the powers were in haste to decide those questions that concerned us, they could have no reason to allege for coming to a conclusion about our affairs, and at the same time come to no resolve on what touched themselves. We, on the other hand, could advance an unanswerable reason, which was, that the sacrifices required from France would assume a different aspect according to the use that should be made of the territories abandoned by her; and that, viewed in this light, the whole matter was resolved into a question of the balance of power, and that consequently, France, before accepting the position prepared for her, ought to learn what was intended for others. No reply could be made to such an argument, and France would have an immense advantage in appearing at Vienna with her fate still undecided, for in the midst of the divisions which would inevitably arise amongst her oppressors, she might find allies who would help her to obtain better conditions than those she had been offered. Of course, this same reason ought to induce the other powers to desire an immediate settlement for all that concerned France, but it was a reason that could not be easily avowed, and a little firmness might have induced an adjournment of all the pending questions to Vienna. In any case, France need not have signed, and it would have been impossible to compel her.

One man alone in the royal council saw the course that ought to be pursued, and that man was General Dessoles. "Why," he said, "conclude to-day? We shall not possess less influence at Vienna because of appearing there without having our fate irrevocably decided: the other powers will certainly not be able to decide about the portion each will wish to have; they will have need of us, and we will consequently find allies. There are therefore some chances of our receiving better treatment, and there is no possibility of our receiving worse." This observation, so pregnant with wisdom, was not comprehended by any present, because that minds filled by a dominant prejudice refuse admittance to the simplest ideas. To conclude and publish a peace, to allow the country to enjoy its fruits, and assume to themselves the honour of the deed, was the passion of the moment, as the passion of the previous moment had been to obtain the evacuation of France. And yet, if there

were any means of repairing the fault of over-precipitation committed on the 23rd of April, it would be by a wise tardiness at the actual juncture, and the courage to defer for six months the conclusion so eagerly urged at the present moment. M. de Talleyrand was ordered to yield to necessity, and to change the line of demarcation drawn up by our commissioners. The line in advance of the Belgian fortresses once abandoned, the frontier question lost all its importance. There now only remained to consider some amendments which would give our frontier a more regular outline, and obtain us an increase of some hundred thousand inhabitants, together with two or three third-class fortresses, but none equal in value to Mons, Namur, or Luxemburg.

After several days' discussion, these unimportant rectifications were accorded us, nor were they to be despised. In 1790 our frontier line formed a sweep between Maubeuge and Givet, leaving Givet at the angle. The line now traced from Maubeuge to Givet, being made slightly convex, effaced the sweep, and gave us two additional fortresses—Philippeville and Marienburg. Leaving Luxemburg without the line, it was continued to Sarre in such a manner as to preserve us Sarrelouis. In a word, without reaching the important point of Kaisers-Lautern, a medium course was taken between the line that we demanded and that of 1790, following the course of the Queich, by which we obtained an addition of some importance; for Landau, instead of being isolated, as formerly, in the midst of the German territory, was completely united to ours.

These augmentations, together with Montbéliard and Avignon, which the allied monarchs did not wish to give either to the Germanic empire or to Rome, did not give us half the promised million souls, of which we were only allowed to speak on condition of resigning our claim. The deficiency was sought to the east and south—that is, in Switzerland and Savoy. We got some part of the country of Gex around Geneva; then tracing a line that divided Savoy in two, we obtained Chambéry and Annecy. This frontier was of much less value than that demanded by our commissioners, and which we might have claimed in compensation for what we had lost; but such as it was, it was a little better than that of 1790, to which we have since been condemned in punishment of the events of 1815. These difficulties being got rid of—thanks to our compliance—others might arise on the subject of the general European arrangements, from which an effort had been made to exclude us by the treaty of Chatillon—a proceeding for which no excuse existed since the re-establishment of the Bourbons. Undoubtedly, the desire to exclude us was still the same; but those who entertained it dared not avow the wish. Some general expressions were

invented, which formed very vague guarantees as to the future balance of power in Europe. They were as follows:—

"The German States shall be independent, and united by a federal union.

"Holland shall be placed under the sovereignty of the house of Orange, and receive an increase of territory. It shall never pass under the rule of a foreign prince.

"Independent Switzerland shall continue to govern herself.

"Italy, except those portions restored to Austria, shall be composed of sovereign States."

But touching these European arrangements, announced in so summary a manner, there was one point not immediately made public; and that was the proportions in which the territories taken from France should be distributed amongst the principal co-sharers. We had the mournful honour of receiving this confidence, but in secret articles, intended rather to shackle our actions than to give weight to our influence. These articles were as follows:—

"Holland shall receive the countries ceded by France, between the sea, the French frontier of 1790, and the Meuse.

"The countries yielded by France on the left bank of the Rhine shall serve as compensation for the German States.

"The Austrian possessions in Italy shall be limited by the Po, the Tessino, and the Lago Maggiore.

"The King of Sardinia shall be indemnified for the portion of Savoy ceded to France by the possession of the ancient republic of Genoa."

Thus, by these articles, all Belgium was to be given to Holland; Bavaria was to receive a part of the ancient ecclesiastical electorates in exchange for the Tyrol, which was to be restored to Austria; Austria, besides her ancient possessions, was to have all the territory of the Venetian republic; lastly, the kingdom of Sardinia was to absorb Genoa; and thus the number of independent States would be considerably diminished. Not a word was said of Saxony or Poland, for that was a subject on which nobody dared to touch, so much avidity was anticipated on one side, and so much resistance on the other.

It only remained to decide about the colonies. There, it seemed, we should be compensated for our sacrifice on the continent, and that if we did not obtain an increase, we should not at least suffer any diminution. The restitution of our colonies ought, so to speak, to follow as a matter of course. But we had not yet reached the term of our sacrifices, and as M. de Laforest, one of our negotiators, said—"Wormwood was poured forth for us drop by drop."

Martinique and Guadeloupe were first mentioned—the latter was to be taken from Sweden and restored to us; Bourbon in

the Indian Seas was also mentioned, and these were spoken of with confidence, and as possessions of whose restoration there could be no doubt. But nothing was said of the isle of France, that Malta of the Indian Ocean. What was to be done with it we were not told. At last an explanation was given. That power which had taken the Cape of Good Hope from her ally Holland, which by a positive breach of faith had deprived Europe of Malta, declared that she must have the isle of France, because it was the route to India. We were allowed to keep the isle of Bourbon, however, because it lay quite open; but the isle of France, the great fortress of these seas, England was to have that. What could we oppose to such pretensions, when we had not a single ally, when the only one that we might have gained, the Emperor of Russia, had been offended by us, and annoyed both in important and trifling matters. Our only resource would have been to break off the treaty, and at Vienna appeal with indignation to assembled Europe against these repeated refusals to do us justice—to appeal to Europe, that would be then enlightened by a careful inquiry into all these questions, and still more by the shameless display of such unlicensed ambition. Unfortunately, such a proceeding was not even thought of.

These new exactions were made known to the royal council, and the consternation there was general. It was then seen what it was to be dependent on foreigners or on their generosity. The English had also announced their intention of depriving us of some of the Antilles, such as St. Lucy and Tobago, which were of little consequence in comparison with the isle of France. Louis XVIII., who did not foresee the value that the isle of Bourbon would acquire by the development of commerce, said with apparent justice—"What could we do with Bourbon without the isle of France? It is like giving us a fortress without the citadel that commands it. Let them take, if they will, Bourbon with the isle of France, and leave us what we possess of the Antilles." These reflections contained some justice, but to whom were they to be addressed? who could be made to listen? Nothing remained but to yield or obey to the inspirations of despair.

We had recourse to private communications with Lord Castlereagh, who decided on all maritime affairs, and indeed, on almost all continental questions. M. de Talleyrand found him calm and even gentle, but obstinate and immovable as a rock. He gained nothing. M. de Vitrolles, endowed with less self-command, had a stormy interview with this minister, and obtained nothing but an almost cynical avowal of Britain's ambition. "Every position on the route to India," said Lord Castlereagh, "ought to belong to us, and shall belong to us." M. de Vitrolles recalled the fine-sounding declarations that had

been made at the passage of the Rhine, and still more recently at the gates of Paris, declarations that promised to respect France and her dignity, and only deprive her of what she had taken from others, and which in her hands had become dangerous to the public security. Lord Castlereagh seemed to think that the powers had fulfilled their promises when they did not treat France as Poland had formerly been treated.

Again we were obliged to submit, for there was no means of resisting those unbridled ambitions all leagued against us. Only one reflection could suggest itself in contemplating such deeds, a reflection of which our oppressors took little heed, and it was, that by acting thus they rendered Napoleon much less guilty in the eyes of the world, and the Bourbons less popular in those of France.

There remained but one question to be decided—an important question, too, and most humiliating, should it be decided against us—this was the question of the expenses of the war. Only one of the belligerent powers—Prussia—had pretensions on this point, which left us some chance of escaping oppressive exactions. During the last twenty years our armies had visited all the European powers, and inflicted on them all the evils attendant on the presence of an enemy; but it must be allowed that Prussia suffered more than any other. She expected to be compensated, not only for the contributions which Napoleon had imposed upon her, but for the effects of our presence on her territories during the campaign of 1812. She consequently demanded, besides the restitution of the deeds representing the unpaid expenses, and which amounted to one hundred and forty million francs deposited in the *domaine extraordinaire*, an indemnity of one hundred and thirty-two millions, exclusive of the share she claimed in the sale of our arsenals and magazines. Prussia had undeniably suffered a great deal during our long wars, but if we call to mind that she took the initiative in the aggressions of 1792 merely for the sake of interfering in our home concerns, that in 1806 she abandoned herself to the wildest passion against France, and that quite recently, during the invasion, the conduct of her soldiers had been most odious, it must be admitted that the wrongs between her and France had been mutual. We were therefore less disposed to yield to her demands than to those of any other power. Her king, honest but avaricious, held as firmly to the demands for money that he had made as Austria for the Italian, as England for the maritime provinces. We were presented with Prussia's bill, and requested to look over it, and if we did not receive a summary demand for payment, we heard language that very much resembled it.

M. de Talleyrand peremptorily repelled these demands, and

declared that he neither could nor would not subscribe to them. He referred the matter immediately to the royal council. None would suffer it, and that sensation of despair was at last felt to which the ministers had been more than once on the point of yielding. The king expressed an indignation that was shared in by everybody, and said that he would spend three hundred millions in making war on Prussia, rather than spend one hundred in satisfying her demands. He added, that he knew how desirous France was of peace, and how much this desire had influenced the reception given to him and his family; but he knew that she would not brook the excess of degradation now sought to be inflicted on her, and would not take it ill of him if he resisted strangers who thus abused the facility with which they had been received, and that for his part, far from thinking himself ungrateful towards the cabinets of Europe, he believed them to be ungrateful towards him, for the Bourbons had been as useful in effecting their entrance into France as they had been to the Bourbons in procuring their restoration to the throne. He therefore declared that he decidedly refused the new burden that the allied sovereigns wished to impose upon his subjects.

The entire council applauded this resolution, and again deplored the unfortunate convention of the 23rd April. The Duke de Berry exclaimed that with the garrisons and the returned prisoners the king would have 300,000 men; that he ought to put himself at their head and fall upon the allies, who had but 200,000, and that this act of patriotic despair would for ever secure to the Bourbons the affections of the French people. M. de Talleyrand did not say no, but contented himself with remarking that the 300,000 men, with whom it was proposed to attack the allies, were owed to the much abused convention of the 23rd April.

M. de Talleyrand, whilst decidedly refusing the demands of Prussia, still felt that the project of 300,000 French attacking 200,000 foreigners was a serious matter, for the general who knew how to lead the French to victory was in the isle of Elba, so he determined to try whether the voice of reason would not be listened to. He had an interview with Lord Castlereagh, the Emperor of Russia, and M. de Metternich. He told them that the king and the princes were determined to let the treaty of peace be wrecked on this question, whatever might be the consequences; that besides, it was compromising for a miserable pecuniary consideration, not alone the great work of the restoration of peace, but also the restoration of order in Europe, for there was not a sovereign in Europe who was not deeply interested in the security of Louis XVIII. on his throne; that to humiliate the Bourbons in this manner, to render them

unpopular would be to act against the aim the allies had proposed to themselves; and to sacrifice such important interests to the avarice of Prussia was neither wise, dignified, nor honourable. Lord Castlereagh, who was always reasonable when the Low Countries, the Cape of Good Hope, or the Mauritius was not in question, and M. de Metternich, who was always ready to judge the conduct of Prussia without any flattering illusions, agreed with M. de Talleyrand. The Emperor Alexander, whose delicacy blushed at the avarice of his friend Frederick William, was of the same opinion, and all three forced Prussia to yield. The spirit of economy was in this prince a virtue that had degenerated into a vice, and he was capable of acting most unwisely to gratify a passion that was originally the offspring of wisdom.

The contribution to Prussia was thus avoided. There still remained the common contribution founded on the right of conquest applied to the arsenals, the magazines, and other property of the State. According to the convention of the 23rd April, the foreign armies ought on the very day of the signing of this convention to have given up the administration of the occupied provinces, nor ought they to have levied further contributions, nor longer retained any of our public property. But they pretended that for military effects, for captured magazines, for contributions levied but unpaid, and for wood ordered to be cut down in the State forests, there was due to them a sum which they did not blush to estimate at 182 millions. Of this sum, Prussia claimed the largest part; England asked nothing, for if this latter power had been severe where territory was concerned, she was remarkably easy in money matters. For example, the Duke of Wellington's troops observed perfect discipline in the south, and showed a scrupulous respect for all property both public and private. It was evident that in treating with England we had to do with a great nation, ambitious but not avaricious.

The king's council showed equal firmness concerning this other ill-cloaked contribution of war. Lord Castlereagh and M. de Nesselrode supported M. de Talleyrand; two French commissioners, General Dulauloy and Baron Marchand, charged with this arrangement, defended the French interests with great firmness, and it was finally agreed that we should pay a sum of 25 millions, which, according to the laws of war, was very nearly due.

The division of the naval armaments found in the ports yielded by France was deferred to the definite negotiation of peace. It is certain that all this matériel, consisting of twenty-five ships of the line afloat, and twenty on the stocks, besides a considerable number of smaller vessels, and a large quantity of stores

dispersed in the ports of Hamburg, Bremen, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Antwerp, Flushing, Ostend, Genoa, Leghorn, Corfu, and Venice; it is certain, we say, that all this matériel had been procured with French money, that the labour and materials needed for the ships had been paid for, which was an advantage, and not a burden, since the people had been employed, and a market opened for the products of the locality. The only exception was the Dutch fleet, built before the union with the empire, and which should in justice be restored to the Low Countries. It was therefore stipulated that this fleet should be restored unconditionally, but that of the forty-six ships and other vessels of inferior rank dispersed in the above-mentioned ports, two-thirds should belong to France, and one-third to the different maritime localities where they lay. This decision was not quite just, but the loss was not much to be regretted, as France had in her own ports a larger naval force than she could employ.

The last question remained to be decided, that of our museums. The subject had never been mentioned, and the omission was intentional. The sovereigns were accustomed to visit them daily, to admire them in the state in which Napoleon had left them, that is to say, containing the riches of civilised Europe, and they had almost considered it a duty to respect collections where they had been received with so much warmth, and for which they had expressed so much admiration. Besides, this was a question that principally concerned Southern Italy and Spain, for both of which powers but little interest was felt by the allied monarchs; but the pride of France was at stake, and that must not be wounded. We were thus left the masterpieces conquered by our armies, left them as one may say by preterition, by neglecting to speak of them. But in private conversations much stress was laid on the important concession thus made us, and it had indeed a considerable moral influence.

This labour, called the treaty of Paris, was terminated on the 30th May, and consisted of several deeds, identical but separate, signed by England, Russia, Austria, and Prussia, who became security for all Europe. Sweden was joined to these signatures, on account of Guadeloupe, which she had for a short while possessed, and Portugal, because of the portion of Guiana that was restored to us. The peace with Spain was to be arranged separately, as this power had no representative at Paris, owing to the position of Ferdinand VII., who had not yet made his entry into Madrid. Besides, the peace with Spain, thanks to the Pyrenees, could be more easily concluded than any other.

However much the excellent frontier was to be regretted, that we might have had in the direction of the Low Countries

in compensation for that of the Rhine, and which might have been obtained, either by not having so precipitately signed the armistice of the 23rd of April, or by referring the definite conclusion of peace to the congress at Vienna, still this treaty, called the treaty of Paris, was not so disadvantageous as had been apprehended. We were exempted from paying the expenses of the war; we preserved the immense riches in works of art acquired at the cost of our blood; we had gained, in addition to our possessions of 1790, Philippeville and Marienburg near the Low Countries, Landau in the direction of the Rhine, and one-half of Savoy in the direction of the Alps. The isle of France was the only serious loss, and could not fail to affect our commerce. The treaty of Paris could only be considered unfortunate in comparison with those of Campo-Formio and Lunéville, which, without menacing the peace of Europe, seemed to have definitely assured our geographical frontier; and in reflecting that but for the faults of the empire, these acquisitions might have been permanent, the sorrow of France ought to be universal and profound. We shall see presently what effect the treaty of the 30th May produced on the public mind.

It was proposed to publish the conditions of the peace at the same time as the constitution, the framing of which had not been suspended during the negotiations. The allied monarchs, who were desirous of returning to their own dominions, wished to see all the affairs of France concluded at once, and insisted that Louis XVIII. should fulfil the engagements of St. Ouen, for which they considered themselves in a certain degree responsible, especially towards those who had surrendered to the allies in the hope of being protected from the passions of the emigrants. The drawing up of the constitution was consequently continued with great activity, and in a spirit of liberality, truly meritorious on the part of Louis XVIII., especially when one considers the opinions of the royalist party at that period.

The royalists were not more deficient in talent than others, but they had not studied things in their essence, and did not possess the information that springs from such studies. It was only in the very lowest ranks of the revolutionary party that one could find such narrow and such obstinate prejudices. In the old military nobility there existed a blind hatred of everything that had arisen in France during the last thirty years, and the conviction that the old régime ought to be re-established by force. The parliamentary nobility, better informed, but not more enlightened, could only understand a constitution such as that of the ancient parliaments, which sometimes contradicted but never checked the king. Amongst the most distinguished royalists, those whom misfortune and inaction had rendered

studious, the love of the past and the hatred of the present had been systematised and formed into singular theories under the influence of M. de Bonald, an excellent but paradoxical writer, who possessed the rather rare merit of developing false ideas in a healthy style. These theories, the inevitable and merited reaction consequent on the excesses of the French Revolution, consisted especially in a profound contempt for written constitutions, which were pronounced to be one of the most impertinent vanities of the modern mode of thinking. It is true, that when we consider the fate of the numerous constitutions which had been put forth in writing during the previous seventy years, we cannot help concurring in the opinion expressed by the royalists. However, these feelings carried beyond a certain degree possessed their own share of vanity and impertinence. For example, M. de Bonald's disciples asserted that constitutions ought not to be written, that being the offspring of time and not of man, they, like the great works of nature, ought to grow gradually, sometimes taking the form of written laws, but being more frequently the result of custom, traditions, and habits, and that all these combined circumstances, constituting the idiosyncrasies of a nation, formed its true constitution, the only one that would not pass away like a dream. Starting from this principle, they asserted that the ancient France had had a constitution, which had endured for centuries, whilst the constitutions devised since 1789 had succeeded each other like the waves of an enraged sea. The embarrassment of these gentlemen was great when asked to define this constitution, which consisted of an absolute monarch sometimes contradicted by the parliament, from whose expostulations he escaped by having recourse to the *lits de justice* or the Bastille; assembling the States-General once in a century, and obliged to dismiss them immediately after, and so little capable of profiting of these institutions when involved in either political or financial difficulties that it was in consequence of seeking to bring them into operation that the deplorable disorders of 1789 had come to pass. And in fact, what had this so much boasted constitution produced when set to work in 1787 by the convocation of the Notables, and in 1789 by the assembly of the States-General? the French Revolution.

It was certainly a strange idea to eulogise a constitution which had produced such results. Great would have been the confusion of its admirers had a proposal been made to re-establish this constitution. Where were the nobility, the clergy, the parliament, the *Tiers-état*, the nation of 1789? Instead of a wealthy noblesse enjoying many privileges, and holding all the high military employments, there was left only a scattered, half-ruined nobility, that had no other means of becoming rich

than by the consequences of the French Revolution—strangers to the army, by whom they were not loved, and whom they did not love (we speak of 1814), and possessing, in a word, no influence; instead of a clergy, proprietors of landed property, noble, eloquent, talented, and at that time of such distinguished merit that the clergy furnished France her ablest statesmen and greatest ministers—instead of such men there was now a clergy, poor, restricted to the discharge of professional duties, taken from every class of society, and entirely dependent upon the government; instead of an opulent hereditary magistracy who enjoyed the administrative functions, as the nobility did the military, by privilege, and who were competent to the discharge of these functions—instead of these we had a magistrate exclusively selected from amongst the citizens of moderate fortune, and appointed, like the other functionaries, by the executive power, upright, but incapable of offering other resistance than a rigorous observance of the civil laws; and in short, underlying all this was a people entirely transformed, that had attained a sort of absolute unity, no longer admitting distinctions of class, or recognising privileges, having all the same ideas, the same habits, the same ambition: such was France in 1814, and the systematic royalists would have been sadly embarrassed if, taken at their word, they had been charged to reconstruct the old constitution. They would be as embarrassed as an architect who, having full liberty to build upon what plan he pleased, should be condemned to employ materials that were nowhere to be found.

All these theories were in reality only satires on the French Revolution, often indeed just, and even eloquent, when they were directed against its excesses, but vain as the wailing or regret for that which is no more, when they tended to the re-establishment of a past that no power on earth could call back from annihilation.

Amongst these adversaries of written constitutions, even those who were most deficient in practical sense, when they were asked to decide and commence the work, declared, as everybody did, for a limited, enlightened monarchy restrained and strongly influenced by the chambers; in short, what is called an English monarchy, because the English were the first who established this form of government. These royalists only desired to gather from the vast rubbish of the old edifice a certain number of ancient materials more or less recognisable, and make them figure in the new building. Thus they wished that the ancient nobility and clergy should be restored and formed into a Chamber of Peers, and that the Lower Chamber should consist of those who formerly constituted the *Tiers-état*, divided into classes according to their trades. Thus far and no

further went the pretensions of those who were compelled to emerge from their perpetual lamentation over the past. But this would have been to impose upon themselves the task of recovering and re-combining the destroyed elements, which would have presented a ridiculous contrast with modern society, and shattered that great national unity in which consists the strength of modern France; and it would have been a profitless insult to the existing spirit of equality, for the advantage of a system that could produce no beneficial result, for the chambers thus constituted would have put forward as strong pretensions as the others, and would have as certainly struggled with the monarch for ascendency—a struggle that would have terminated as fatally under such conditions as it had done under others, did the monarch conduct himself in the same manner. In fact, what these royalists desired would be a kind of modern edifice bearing on its front some ornaments of the middle ages, which would have no real influence on the construction, arrangement, or destiny of the monument.

There was therefore nothing serious in these theories, which were only the prejudices of the past, systematised too late by some eminent and melancholy minds. It must be admitted, however, that the king and his nephews, obliged to be more practical than their party, and fortunately having just returned from England, and not from one of the continental States, did not share in these false doctrines, or if they did, acted as though they did not. Without fully acknowledging, and above all, without admiring the empire of public opinion, they were determined not to come in contact with its strongest points. Now there were two points which no power on earth could induce public opinion to yield—first, civil equality, which consists in every man enjoying in the eyes of the law the same rights, and being liable to the discharge of the same duties, in paying the same taxes, performing the same military service, being judged according to the same laws, by the same judges, being eligible to the same public employments, whatever the birth, religion, or fortune of the individual; secondly, constitutional royalty, that is, limited monarchy, restricted more or less by two chambers. The first of these opinions was the work of the eighteenth century; the second, the result of Napoleon's despotism; both were invincible.

Nothing now remained to be considered but questions of form or style. As to the form, the Bourbons, as we have seen, had brought with them into France an almost insurmountable prejudice. Pretending that they were recalled to the throne not by an act of the Senate, but in virtue of their own right, they wished to *grant* and not *receive* a constitution, and on this point, the public, foreseeing as little as the dynasty the danger

of this absolute principle, which involved the power of modifying this *granted* constitution, was prepared to admit a pretension that only seemed a subtilty of theory or an affair of self-love. Provided that the essential principles of the constitution were granted, the public cared little whether the constitution proceeded from the king or the Senate, whether it came from above or below. Once arrived at this point, all things must go on smoothly.

The king had confided the task of drawing up a sketch of the constitution to MM. de Montesquiou and Ferrand, certain that the only principle to which he was firmly attached, monarchical supremacy, would not be in danger in the hands of those old royalists. As to the other points, he felt more confidence in his deputies than in himself, for he cared little about the matter: with these gentlemen he associated M. Beugnot, who possessed an easy and facile style, and knew how to choose expressions calculated to conciliate conflicting opinions. He recommended M. Beugnot to observe the most absolute secrecy towards M. de Talleyrand. Although more inclined than kings in general to allow his ministers to govern, still Louis XVIII. was not desirous of the presence of a minister who wished to interfere in everything. He wished M. de Talleyrand to confine himself to foreign affairs, M. de Montesquiou to occupy himself with the home department, and M. de Blacas to devote his attention to affairs of the court; he hoped thus to diminish by dividing the power of his ministers. Neither did he wish that in case of difficulty M. de Talleyrand should call the Emperor Alexander to his assistance, and influenced by all these reasons, he did not wish him to have any part in the formation of the constitution.

The sketch of the constitution being made, was submitted to Louis XVIII., who, without making any or scarcely any alteration, referred it, conformably to the declaration of St. Ouen, to two committees, one appointed by the Senate, and one by the legislative corps. The committee appointed by the Senate was composed of MM. Barthélemy, Serrurier (the marshal), Barbé-Marbois, de Fontanes, Germain Garnier, de Pastoret, de Semonville, Boissy d'Anglas, and Vimar. The committee appointed by the legislative corps was composed of MM. Lainé, Felix Faulcon, Chabaud-Latour, Bois-Savary, Duhamel, Duchesne de Gillevoisin, Faget de Baure, Clausel de Coussergues, Blanquart de Bailleul. No objection could be made to these persons, who corresponded to the moderate and liberal ideas of the time. The king recommended as much unity as possible in their labours, and reserved to himself the decision of all contested points, more for the honour of his prerogative than for the value of the things themselves.

The chancellor laid the subject before the two committees assembled at the chancery, read the plan, and then commenced the discussion of the different articles.

In drawing up this plan great care had been taken to use expressions which would show that the new constitution emanated from royalty alone, from royalty understanding the wants of the time, and acting under the impulse of its own wisdom, as it had already done in emancipating the communes, in instituting the parliaments, in reforming the civil legislation. Consequently no mention was made of the return of the Bourbons to the throne, the causes of this return, the nature of the monarchical principle, or its hereditary descent from male to male in order of primogeniture, all of which subjects were spoken of in the constitution of the Senate. M. Boissy d'Anglas remarked this circumstance, and regretted it as an omission injurious to the interests of royalty. He was told immediately and without hesitation that these omissions were intentional, that the right of the Bourbons to the throne needed no enunciation, that it existed anterior to every other right, and that even when absent and physically replaced by usurpation in France, they still had not ceased to reign there; neither did the principle and manner of inheritance require to be mentioned, for they were co-existent with the ancient constitution of the French monarchy; that the question at issue was merely the modification of certain parts of this constitution, and granting the French people some rights not formerly recognised; that, therefore, it was only necessary to announce the new enactments without occupying themselves with those which, amidst all the vicissitudes of time, had not ceased virtually to exist.

M. de Fontanes, anxious to efface the memory of the services he had rendered Napoleon by his compliance with the wishes of the Bourbons, hastened to support this doctrine, saying, that the origin of power ought to be allowed to remain wrapt in shadows, in order to preserve its venerable antiquity; endeavouring to approach too near the source would be to destroy the reverence it inspired. As if a prestige, once destroyed, could be restored at will, or by convention. These remarks elicited no reply, and silence was certainly the most prudent part. Assuredly the committees ought, had it been possible, even for the sake of the dynasty itself, to have insisted on these omissions being supplied, in order to deprive the Bourbons of the means of one day breaking the contract that bound them to the nation. But how could the future, which no one penetrated at that time, be unveiled for them; that future hidden alike from the restored dynasty, and those who sought to limit its rule.

The examination of the different articles of the constitution was then proceeded with. The first referred to what was called

the public rights of the French, consisting of equality in the eyes of the law, of the equitable divisions of public employments, individual liberty, liberty of conscience, liberty of the press, respect for all kinds of property, equality in the form of military service, and finally, a complete oblivion for all acts and opinions since 1789. On the greater number of these points there was no difference of opinion. However, there was a discussion about some, and even in some cases a change of form. After admitting an equal protection to every form of worship, it was added that the Catholic religion was the religion of the State. MM. Boissy d'Anglas and Chabaud-Latour desired that the meaning of these words should be defined, and asked what they meant, if, for example, they did not give some advantage of position to the Catholic religion, and whether the other forms of worship would not be placed in a sort of dependence by this advantage. They were told that France was Catholic, and must not fear to avow her religion. It was then purely and simply an act of deference to the Catholic faith, a sort of apology to that creed for the equality granted to the other forms of worship. No objection was made, for nothing would have been gained by discussion. There was scarce any discussion on the question of individual liberty and the liberty of the press. As to the liberty of the press, all were of opinion that it ought to be granted, only restraining the excesses into which the press was only too much inclined to run. At this period, for want of experience, nobody thought of the distinction which was afterwards established between newspapers and books, nor did any one think of submitting either to a preliminary examination—that is, to a censorship.

The respect promised to property, no matter whence derived, was the most important question of the day. It concerned, as may be divined, the property called *national*, which was no other than the confiscated property of the emigrants or that taken from the Church, and which had been sold at different periods of the Revolution for larger or smaller sums according to the state of the times, and so passed into the possession of millions of Frenchmen. The anxiety of the possessors was natural when they beheld the emigrants, proud of their triumph, confident in their strength, and very much irritated against the detainers of their property, which had in many cases been purchased at a merely nominal price, sometimes for a handful of worthless assignats, and not unfrequently obtained by dishonourable means. But the tranquillity of the kingdom depended on maintaining the validity of these sales, and neither the king nor the princes entertained a doubt on the subject. Their desire to see the emigrants in possession of their property was not inferior to that of the emigrants themselves, but the

certainty of an immediate political convulsion restrained them, and the king had consented to this clear and positive announcement, "*All property is inviolable, not excepting that called national, the law recognising no difference.*"

This mode of expression was perfectly satisfactory, and better could not be desired. But it was too significant for some members of the committee, who, on this occasion, revealed the secret designs of the royalist party, and especially, the ruse by which this party wished to escape from the necessity that weighed upon the Bourbons, and which was the chief condition of their return. M. de Fontanes, pursuing the expatiatory system on which he had entered, exclaimed warmly against the proposed enactment. According to him, custom had established a marked difference between patrimonial property and that called national; and if this difference existed essentially, how could the law dare assert that none ought to be made? Until this time even the laws of the Revolution had confined themselves to proclaiming the inviolability of national property, but they had never carried their zeal so far as to seek to give it a moral value which it did not possess. What folly, then, to choose the very day on which the Bourbons returned to France to render still worse the condition of these unfortunate persons who had been stripped of their property!

It was easy to reply that these unfortunate persons—not all, indeed, but a great many—had fought against their country, and that therefore they could not inspire an unreserved interest; and that the return of the Bourbons naturally exciting their hopes, it was necessary to choose the moment of that return for strengthening the guarantees given to the purchasers of national property. However, the authors of this project were silent, as if to show that they yielded to the necessity of the times, whilst cursing it in their hearts. But M. Lainé rent the veil. He had warmly espoused the cause of liberty twenty years before, and like many others, had been violently repulsed by the excesses of the Revolution, so far as almost to adopt the sentiments of the emigrants themselves. "Let us speak frankly," said he; "let us admit that we must humour the holders of national property; but even whilst humouring them, we are desirous that the property they possess should return to its ancient owners. Morality, justice, and the true monarchical spirit dictate these wishes. Now, this cannot be effected without compromises between the old and new proprietors. Such compromises are being made in many quarters, and they are the effects of public opinion on the new proprietors. Why, then, seek to lessen the moral force that is inducing them to make restitution?"

This was simply announcing a wish to intimidate new

proprietors into yielding the property they held to its ancient owners for some trifling sum. Amongst the actual holders of such property there were certainly some who had purchased for almost nothing; but many had paid ready money, and at a rate approaching the full value. Besides, thousands of sales had already transferred a great part of this property into new hands, and almost on terms equal to its full value. The project, therefore, of restoring this property to its ancient proprietors was morally unjust as well as politically unwise.

Those who had drawn up the plan of the constitution persisted in remaining silent, when M. Beugnot, minister of State, commissioner of police, and compiler of the article under discussion, spoke in its defence. He knew, by the reports which he daily received, in what degree the indiscreet hopes of the emigrants had become serious threats for the holders of national property; and he gave such a description of the present state of affairs as seriously alarmed the two assembled committees. However, he could not have carried his point if he had not used a subterfuge. The series of general guarantees contained the article which said—"The State can exact the sacrifice of a property for the public benefit, if such be legally proved, but with a previous indemnity." He placed this article immediately after the one in dispute, and he presented it, thus placed, as though it would hereafter give an opening for an indemnity that the State itself would pay to the ancient proprietors. This subterfuge, which was only a pretext for some, though a reason for others, terminated the discussion, and the proposed form was adopted.

To this series of general claims and duties had been joined the article relative to the military duty, to which every citizen was bound. The expedient already employed for the abolition of the conscription was adopted, in announcing a law intended to define at a later period the mode of recruiting, which would naturally bring back the old form without its abuses, which resulted less from the nature of the institution than from the character of the government called upon to employ it.

The general claims being once decided, the next subject to be considered was the form the royal government was to assume. Upon this subject there was not a single dissentient voice, excepting when extreme measures were proposed. An inviolable king, entrusted with the entire executive power, was universally admitted, and who was represented by ministers responsible to two chambers of different origin. Whilst the emigrants cherished the most extravagant ideas, the men of the Revolution—emigrants of another kind—did not entertain juster notions; and still fervent adorers of the constitution of 1791 desired but a single chamber. There was not a man in

either of the committees, or amongst enlightened persons, who entertained these opinions. There was therefore no discussion on this point. The fourteenth article, which gave the king the right of regulating the execution of the laws, was taken in its natural and simple sense; and although these words were added—"For the safety of the State"—it did not imply that the king should use the regulative power in order to place himself above the executive, and be able to overturn the constitution when he pleased. Nobody had any other idea than to accord to the royal power the initiative in all measures of defence at home and abroad—a privilege which necessarily belonged to the king—and to unite the regulative power with the executive, which is not less indispensable, the laws, however perfect they may be, leaving a number of details to be regulated, which must, of necessity, be abandoned to the authority charged with their execution. The dictatorship was not perfidiously concealed in the fourteenth article, because, we repeat, it was drawn up in all simplicity and good faith.

There was one question, that of initiative legislation, to which at that time much more importance was attached than there would be nowadays, because experience had not yet shown that the true initiative for a country is to be able to appoint to the ministry the men of its own choice. Ministers appointed in this way ntroduce those laws of which a country has most need. At the period of which we speak, the initiative was highly prized the royalists wishing to secure the privilege for the king, the liberals for the two chambers. To deprive the chambers utterly of the initiative, as was proposed, and reduce their power simply to the privilege of adopting or rejecting the measures proposed by the king, appeared even to the authors of the projected constitution a rigorous proceeding. To get rid of this embarrassment that everybody, even the royal commissioners themselves, seemed to feel, a compromise was proposed. This consisted of giving the chambers the power of addressing the king, and requesting him to present the sketch of the proposed laws, with the certainly wise precaution of requiring that the request should not be transmitted to the crown until it had received the assent of both chambers. It was the initiative itself under a very respectful form, which neither diminished its value nor its authority.

The right of amending the laws submitted to the consideration of the chambers was thus in some degree ameliorated, but this right could only be exercised after being discussed in the bureaux, and after the consent of the ministers or royal commissioners was obtained. In all cases it was the privilege of the king to ratify the law. These precautions against the right of amendment were superfluous, for discussing laws without the

power of modifying them is but a useless expenditure of time. To leave the chambers no choice between absolute adoption or rejection was reducing them to extremities, and destroying that spirit of debate which ought to be the actuating spirit of a free country. Besides, the definite sanction being vested in the crown, guaranteed the royal prerogative in its full extent.

The changes made in the plan of the constitution by the two committees were, as a matter of course, to be submitted to Louis XVIII., and could only be inserted in the series of articles after receiving his consent. The four royal commissioners presented these amendments to the king, and he admitted them without difficulty, saying that he wished the plan should be as far as possible unanimously approved by the two committees.

Instead of a Senate it was resolved that the Upper Chamber should be a Chamber of Peers, to correspond better with the old French monarchy, it being understood that the king should select from the Senate, not all the members, but those who, by their services, their reputation or position, could appear without objection in the new order of things, and that even those members who were not elected should still preserve their salaries. It was decided that the princes should be peers by right of birth. At the suggestion of M. de Semonville, who, from a desire to please, plainly meant the Duke of Orleans, it was decreed that the princes could not take their seats without the king's express permission. As this precaution was contained in the original plan, it was necessary to refer it to Louis XVIII., who simply approved it, without making any sarcastic remark on the prince against whom the measure was directed.

The Second Chamber was called the Chamber of Deputies. It was to be composed for the present, and until remodelled, of the entire legislative corps, which, as we have seen, had won the royal approbation, because the legislative corps was jealous of the Senate, and because it had shown more zeal for the Bourbons. It was decided that the deputies should be chosen from the communal of the different wards by electors qualified to vote by the payment of taxes to the amount of 300 francs; the qualification of the candidates consisting in the payment of taxes to the amount of 1000 francs. Many questions arose on this point. In the first place, should there be a property qualification for the electors and the candidates, and what was to be the amount of the qualification? Nobody hesitated as to the electors. There were doubts about the property tax. M. Felix Faulcon, a worthy man, and much respected, who had for twenty-five years occupied a seat in our assemblies, objected to the property qualification for candidates, and cited himself as an example of the difficulties that would arise from such a condition, for he did not pay the required amount of taxes. His observations were

rejected, but with all the deference due to his character, and it was replied that in giving liberty to a country, guarantees should be sought amongst the holders of property, and in their hands should be placed this novel and capacious liberty, of which the perilous trial was now about to be made. These reasons prevailed. There now remained to be considered the nature of the qualification. The expression *contribution foncière*, or "land tax," was thought too restricted, and it was proposed to add *mobilière*, or "personal," because the tax implied by the latter term had a good deal of analogy with the other. After some discussion the words "assessed taxes" were substituted for "land tax," without any suspicion that by this means the order of things was changed by introducing amongst the electors the class *patentables*, who are taxed, not for the property they possess, but for the profession they exercise. The question of whether the debates of the chambers should be published was not discussed.

With respect to the manner of forming the Second Chamber, M. de Montesquiou, acting on his own authority, wished that the power possessed by the Senate under Napoleon should be vested in the king, namely, the power of choosing the members of the legislative corps from a list prepared by the electoral colleges. In order to prove that such an assembly would not be more subservient than another, he cited the assembly of Notables, which in 1787 rejected all the propositions of the king. He did not find one to support his opinion. M. de Montesquiou's proposal involved the serious inconvenience of depriving the most popular of the chambers—that which was supposed to represent the country—of the appearance of independence, which is of as much importance as independence itself; and the example he had cited proved that in the days of the Revolution the king's appointment had been no guarantee, whilst that in ordinary times it possessed all the imputed disadvantages, and caused it to be said that France was again about to be put under the imperial constitution. This idea, originated by M. de Montesquiou, was not carried into effect.

The initiative in financial measures was granted to the Lower Chamber without opposition, and to the Upper Chamber the judicial power in certain special cases, when, for example, ministers were arraigned. The Chamber of Peers, left to the king's nomination, was to be as a general rule hereditary, excepting in cases where the king conferred a peerage for life. Not a voice was raised against hereditary rank, which was regarded by all as a guarantee for independence of conduct and stability in the form of government.

It was then stipulated that the king should summon the chambers every year, that he could dissolve the Chamber of

Deputies, but under the condition of summoning fresh members in three months, and it was, moreover, decreed that every petition presented to either chamber should be in writing. These points being decided, the next consideration was the judicial order based on those principles of independence which have not varied in France since 1789; and lastly, the guarantees, transitory in their nature, which related to the maintenance of the public debt, the Legion of Honour, the military grades and pensions, the two nobilities, &c., &c.

There was scarcely a discussion on these subjects; and touching those points in which it was agreed that some alteration should be made, and which were consequently submitted to the king, his majesty showed an extreme desire to please, as he considered the monarchical principle quite safe, since he gave and did not receive a constitution. He even consented that it should be made a condition that the kings at their consecration should swear to observe the constitution faithfully, which was not a contract with the nation, as we have since seen, but with God, and of which he who took the oath, and his confessor, were to be the judges. Whilst these questions were being decided one after the other in the commissions, the king scarcely spoke of them in the royal council, merely saying the work was advancing, and that he was satisfied with the spirit in which it was performed. Only on two or three points, such as the conscription and the initiative legislation, did he submit the difficulty to the council, but in a few words, as a subject that concerned him personally and exclusively.

Four days longer than the time first appointed, that is, until the 4th June, were accorded for the promulgation of the constitution, and M. Beugnot asked four more, which would extend the time to the 8th, to put the articles in order, to give a last polish to the work, to prepare the preamble, and above all, to arrange some general principles which would serve as a basis to the electoral law, a subject not yet touched on. M. Beugnot would have obtained the desired delay, but that the allied monarchs, anxious to depart since the peace had been concluded (an event that occurred on the 30th May), desired that all should be finished on the 4th June at the latest. The allied monarchs, it was evident, considered themselves bound in honour to see this constitution promulgated, without which the men who had trusted in them would be without guarantee, the emigrants would be under no restraint, and France, that is to say, Europe, would remain exposed to fresh storms. M. de Metternich said that urgent affairs summoned the allied sovereigns to their own kingdoms, and that their troops were gaining nothing by remaining in France, their officers were ruining themselves there, and that they could not remain any longer. The king's council

appeared both surprised and offended at this demand. "Let them go," hastily and impetuously cried the Duke de Berry; "we do not need their assistance to give a constitution to France; and when they are gone, the concessions that the king is about to make to the country will assume a higher and more independent character." This prince showed an especial desire to get rid of the Emperor of Russia, who was the most exacting of the allied sovereigns. But the foreign ministers declared, that, having kept as few troops as possible in the capital, the last should not be withdrawn until the very day fixed for the royal session, and the fulfilment of the promises made at St. Ouen put beyond all doubt. The council was obliged to yield, and the royal session was fixed for the 4th June. What remained to be done seemed of little importance to the king.

The articles relating to the election of deputies might be referred to the electoral law; the revision of the articles and the drawing up of the preamble were details that could be finished in one night; and orders were given to M. Beugnot to be ready for the appointed day. Two questions remained to be decided—the date of the new constitution and its title. As to the date, Louis XVIII. would not allow a discussion. In his own opinion, he had commenced to reign the day on which the son of Louis XVI. died; he had reigned even whilst Napoleon, raised to the empire by the will of the French nation, was gaining the victories of Austerlitz, Jena, Friedland, and Wagram, and signing the treaties of Presburg, Tilsit, and Vienna. These were only different phases of usurpation which disappeared before the immutable principle of legitimacy. Consequently, Louis XVIII. wished that the constitution should be dated from the nineteenth year of his reign. He listened to the opinion of each member as to the title. M. Dambray thought it ought to be called "Ordinance of Reformation," like the ordinances formerly issued by the kings for the reformation of certain parts of the French legislation. Louis at first approved of this title. However, M. Beugnot proposed another. When the kings of France granted a legal existence either to the commons or to different civil or religious establishments, they did so by means of a deed called a *charter*, a word taken from the Latin. There was an analogy between the business under consideration and what Louis le Gros had done, which pleased the feelings as well as the kingly pride of Louis XVIII.; and he adopted the word *charter*, since become so famous, adding to it the epithet *constitutional*, to indicate more clearly its object. These two questions being decided, M. Beugnot had only to consider the minor details of form, and it was expected from his known expeditiousness that all would be finished in a few hours. The king himself wrote the speech

which he intended to pronounce; he learned it by heart, and his speech seemed to form the sole object of his thoughts. When the king should have spoken, the chancellor (Dambray) was to explain the principles of the *charter*, and M. Ferrand was to read the original. Several royal ordinances were then to be promulgated in presence of the two great bodies convoked for the inauguration of the new institutions. The list of peers was to be read, which contained eighty-three of the old senators, forty of the ancient dukes, and some marshals, who were not members of the Senate. Fifty-five senators were excluded from the peerage—twenty-seven because they were aliens, and twenty-eight because of being regicides, or having taken a leading part during the Revolution and the empire. The ancient senators, whether comprised in the Chamber of Peers or not, were to hold their emoluments under the title of pensions. The legislative corps was to be converted into a Chamber of Deputies, and to sit until a fresh election.

On the morning of the 4th a grand display of French troops, where the national guards made a conspicuous figure, preceded the royal session in which the great promise of St. Ouen was to be fulfilled. The larger portion of the foreign troops was already en route. The remainder were preparing to depart on that day and the following. The Emperor Alexander, who was anxious to visit the Prince of Wales before returning to his own dominions, had left Paris before the royal session. On the very day of his departure he had insisted that the children of Queen Hortense, whose protector he had constituted himself, should receive the Duchy of St. Leu, with a large income. He also wished to secure a suitable position for Prince Eugène, but this matter was referred to the Congress at Vienna. He had departed, delighted with the French, whom he had charmed by his grace and amiability, and but little pleased with the royal family, who did not admire his tone of mind. The King of Prussia and the Emperor of Austria left about the same time. On the very morning of the ceremony there was great excitement at court. A report was spread that a plot had been laid to blow up the royal family by an explosion of gunpowder. The official agents who had hastened to offer their services to the Count d'Artois, and who, under MM. Terrier de Montciel and de la Maisonfort, had commenced to form a kind of voluntary police around him, had seen masses of powder on the quay of the Seine, which appeared to them suspicious. They immediately became excited, and filled the chateau with their rumours. M. Beugnot was called upon, who was at the time hurrying with the preamble of the *charter*, and he was called to fling aside his pen and see to his duties as director of police. When inquiries were made, it was found that it was the Russian

artillery that were loading their powder on the Seine quay preparatory to taking their departure.

This excitement being calmed, all assembled at the Tuileries. M. Beugnot wished to read the preamble to the king; but the monarch, entirely occupied in repeating to himself the speech that he was to make before the chambers, refused to listen, saying that he confided the affair implicitly to him. They then left for the Bourbon palace, talking lightly of serious subjects, because they had not yet learned by the experience of a free government how much influence words have on the public mind. The fear of an explosion having passed away, another succeeded. It was dreaded that either in the Senate or in the legislative corps some objection might be raised against the manner in which the Charter was about to be promulgated. The chancellor had orders to silence any who would be so imprudent as to speak; it would have been a disagreeable scene, annoying to the royal dignity, and very much to be regretted, had it taken place. But quickly engrossed by the preparations for the ceremony, all set out for the Palais-Bourbon, without thinking any more of these possibilities.

The king passed through the garden of the Tuileries in his carriage, surrounded by the princes and marshals, and arrived at the Palais-Bourbon about three o'clock. He was received there with the old royal pomp, and entered supported on the arm of the Duke de Grammont. He took his seat on the throne, having on his right and left, on lower seats, the Duke d'Angoulême, the Duke de Berry, and the Duke d'Orleans, and the Prince de Condé. The only person absent from the assembly was the Count d'Artois, who was ill from an attack of gout and vexation, of which we shall presently tell the cause. The public, weary of great military exhibitions, of which they had seen so many, and beginning to acquire a taste for political spectacles, had assembled in crowds. The most respectable persons of Paris had been admitted into the body of the hall; and on the benches of the two chambers sat the future members of the peerage and the entire legislative corps. When the king appeared, he was received with unanimous acclamations, and for some time the cries of *Vive le Roi!* were repeated with a kind of frenzy. At once moved and reassured, and calculating on a favourably disposed audience, he pronounced, in a sonorous voice, and with great rhetorical skill, the following speech, adapted with much tact to existing circumstances.

"Gentlemen," said the king, "now that for the first time I have assembled around me in this building the great bodies of the State, and the representatives of a nation that does not cease to lavish the most touching marks of affection upon me,

I felicitate myself on having become the dispenser of those benefits which Providence deigns to grant to my people.

"With Austria, Russia, England, and Prussia, I have made a peace, in which their allies are included—that is to say, all the princes of Christendom. The war was universal, and so is the peace.

"The rank that France always held among the nations has not been transferred to another, it is still undividedly hers. The security acquired by other States increases hers, and consequently adds to her true power. That part of her conquests which she has not retained should not therefore be considered as any diminution of her real strength.

"The glory of the French armies has not been dimmed; the monuments of their valour shall remain, and the *chefs d'œuvre* of art are henceforth ours, in virtue of rights more stable and more sacred than those of victory.

"The paths of commerce, so long closed, are about to be opened. The markets of France shall no longer be exclusively open to the productions of her soil and industry. Those articles which habit has made a want, or which are necessary for the arts she practises, will be furnished by the possessions she recovers. She will no longer be debarred these things, or forced to purchase them at an exorbitant price. Our manufactures will flourish again, our maritime towns spring up anew, and all promises us that a lasting calm abroad, and an enduring tranquillity at home, will be the happy fruits of the peace.

"Still a painful remembrance troubles my joy. I was born, and I flattered myself that I should continue all my life, the faithful subject of the best of kings, and to-day I occupy his place! But at least he is not altogether dead; he lives still in this testament that he intended for the instruction of the august and unfortunate child to whom I have succeeded. It is with my eyes fixed on this immortal work, penetrated with the sentiments that dictated it, guided by the experience and aided by the counsels of many amongst you, that I have drawn up this constitutional Charter which is about to be read to you, and which places the prosperity of the State on a solid basis.

"My chancellor will acquaint you more in detail with my paternal intentions."

This discourse, simple, dignified, adroit, and as gracefully pronounced as it was well written, in which as much was said of the peace as of the Charter, was at first received in religious silence, which was succeeded by clamorous applause. The king appeared enchanted by a success which was not alone political but personal. The chancellor next read a discourse, in which he explained the object of the Charter with the evident

intention of showing the royalists that it was inevitable, as also to prove that it emanated fully and entirely from the royal authority. M. Ferrand afterwards read the original of the Charter in a rather low tone, and as far as could be judged during a rapid rehearsal, it satisfied even the most critical; for except in its origin—which was exclusively monarchical—it was nearly a transcript of the constitution of the Senate. When he had finished reading, the chancellor admitted the peers and deputies to take the oath, amidst a profound silence, and a lively curiosity sometimes excited by the great names of the ancient monarchy which had not been heard for so long a time, and sometimes by the great names of the empire which had so often resounded in the glorious bulletins of Napoleon, and which were now so suddenly inscribed in the list of those who swore inviolable fidelity to the Bourbons.

The ceremony was concluded in perfect order, and without any of the anticipated incidents. Louis XVIII. returned to the Tuileries, loudly applauded by the two chambers, and personally congratulated by all those whom etiquette permitted to address a compliment to the king. In this solemn spectacle he saw but one thing, his discourse; he was conscious but of one result, his personal success. It is sometimes very wise to applaud princes, as it is also very wise to know when to be silent in their presence. On this occasion the applauses of the chambers and the people were most àpropos, and made the king as contented with the Charter as though it had been the offspring of his fondest wishes. He had consented to it without reluctance, which was a great deal, and he was ready to put it into execution, which was still more. But in justice we must admit that it was principally the work of the Senate, that is, of the old representatives of the French Revolution, who had recovered the faculty of expressing their true opinions on the day of Napoleon's downfall, and who did not wish that the downfall of that wonderful man should be also that of the principles of 1789. It must be added that the Charter was also, in some measure, the work of the allied monarchs, not that they loved constitutional government, but they considered it a point of honour to keep their word with the Senate that had rendered such services; they also feared the folly of the emigrants, and thought it necessary to restrain them, not only for the sake of France, but of Europe. From this we may conclude that the Charter, like all acts that are not the result of a transient party feeling, was everybody's work.

However, appearances, whether deceitful or not, must often be taken as reality, and it was well done to attribute the Charter to Louis XVIII., who had more or less part in it. He got the credit of it, and all enlightened men felt indebted to him for it.

The Senate had no reason to complain, although some of its members were excluded from the peerage, for those who were excluded could by no means appear in the new order of things, with the exception, however, of certain persons, whose omission was much to be regretted, such as Marshal Massena, not admitted because he was born at a league beyond the frontier of 1790—a circumstance that ought to have been ignored; and Marshal Davout, because that his defence of Hamburg had offended the allies. As to the rest, all, whether excluded or admitted, preserved their old emoluments. The legislative corps was to continue undisturbed until the legal time for re-electing a fifth of the members should arrive.

The Charter, putting aside the question of its origin, which seemed at that time only a dispute about words, contained all the principles of a true representative monarchy, and was disapproved by none but extreme royalists. It received the approbation of Sieyès, the best of judges, and the least to be suspected, for he was of the number of excluded senators, and he did not hesitate to say, that with this Charter France could be free if she would; and that no advantage gained by the Revolution had been lost in the ruin of the empire, except, indeed, our frontiers, the only serious loss, and deserving of long regret.

The treaty of Paris, published at the same time as the Charter, did not meet with equal success. Certainly, peace could not be more desired than it was at that time by France, and with very good reason, but the treaty of the 30th of May, which was now published, was not the peace itself, for the country had been enjoying peace since the 23rd April; it was the price of the peace, and a very painful price it was. Consequently, the perusal of this treaty produced a most saddening effect, not alone upon the men compromised by the last revolution, but upon the most impartial and disinterested classes of the nation. To their eyes the cruel hand of the stranger was visible in these transactions, especially in the tracing of our frontiers. These men had not certainly flattered themselves that France could preserve her geographical limits; they had not hoped that victorious Europe, having marched to the gates of Paris, would leave us the Rhine frontier; but hearing it incessantly repeated on every side that France under the Bourbons would obtain much better conditions than when under Napoleon, people did cherish illusory hopes. But suddenly seeing the sad reality revealed, seeing France alone of all the European powers reduced to the position she held in 1790; above all, seeing us in part deprived of our colonies, whose restitution was to be the recompense of the possessions we abandoned on the continent, a deep feeling of irritation was engendered, par-

ticularly in the seaports, where, however, the desire of peace was stronger than in other places. The loss of the Mauritius was most sensibly felt, and was the source of much irritation against England, who was accused of wishing to prevent the revival of our commerce. The bitterest expressions of feeling were uttered against this ever-present rival. Next to England, the nation most execrated was Austria. The conduct of this power, so justifiable when considered in a political point of view, appeared highly blamable when viewed as a question of natural feeling, and rendered Austria very unpopular. Every evil design was attributed to her influence, and the bad feeling thus engendered was exhibited to her sovereign, whom the French received wherever he appeared with extreme coldness.

It would assuredly have been better policy not to refer to the cause, whether true or false, of our misfortunes, but to confine ourselves to seeking the means still within our power of repairing them. But as usual, people took more pleasure in reproaching each other, and seeking in these reproaches subjects of bitter recrimination. The revolutionists and imperialists reproached the Bourbons with having returned to France in the train of foreigners, and returned only to consummate the humiliation of the country. The royalists, instead of replying that if they had come in the company of foreigners, they had not brought them, and that it was Napoleon who, by his ambition, had opened to them an entrance into France—the royalists, we say, instead of defending themselves by this simple and incontestable truth, did all in their power to turn into ridicule those patriotic lamentations which they ought to have respected, even if they did not share in them. They laughed at the idea of natural frontiers, that fantastic object, as they said, which would cost so much blood to nations if seriously pursued; as if all nations did not propose to themselves a certain territorial limit, more or less legitimate, more or less restricted, to which they tend with more or less prudence, skill, or consideration for others, but which is the ever-acting motive force of all their efforts. As if England had not always laboured to fuse into one the three Britannic kingdoms, without mentioning the Indies, and all the other objects of her ambition! As if Russia had not always endeavoured to obtain possession of Finland, Bessarabia, and the Crimea; and Austria to obtain the sovereignty of the course of the Danube, and the shores of the Adriatic; Prussia to extend her empire to the centre of Germany; and lastly, has not Spain always sought to unite under her sceptre as much as she possibly could of the Peninsula? The royalists said that if France had lost certain territories, she had at least secured a staple peace, which we must admit is the incontestable advantage of all defeated litigants;

and they added that France would now be delivered from those false Frenchmen with the foreign accent who were putting in claims for public posts; as if it were a subject of self-congratulation to get rid of such Frenchmen as the financier Corvetto, the jurisconsult Lasagni, the mathematician Lagrange, the seaman Verhuel, and the warrior Massena! The royalists added, that if they had lost arable land, they had acquired sugar, coffee, and cotton plantations, which were not less needed. They laughed at the idea of the commerce carried on under the empire, and which was condemned to drag its slow course across the whole extent of the empire on carts; and they proudly instituted a comparison between that and the winged maritime commerce that was about to be restored to us. The royalists thus committed the double wrong of mocking high-minded grief and of displaying in vexing contrast their party triumphs, as they were also wrong in reproaching their opponents with the disasters caused by Napoleon and not by his admirers. They ought to have consoled themselves with the thought that if Napoleon had contracted the limits of France in endeavouring to extend them too far, there still remained to us an immense glory, our powerful unity, and the progress of every description which we owed to the Revolution and the empire, and in short, the vitality of the French genius; and that with a few years of peace and a prudently liberal government, we should soon recover the moral and physical superiority which was always essentially ours, and never depended on the possession of a province more or less. This was the real and sole consolation left us. But men in affliction often find a greater comfort in complaining than they could find in the alleviation of their woes, or even in actual cure. Complaining consoles them, and the more bitter the more consolatory. It is best to leave them to their consolation, at the same time reserving to ourselves the privilege of not giving credence to all they say, especially when we have the honour of holding in our hands the scales of history.

BOOK LV.

GOVERNMENT OF LOUIS XVIII.

SCARCELY two months had elapsed since the return of the Bourbons, and France already presented the strongest contrast with what she had been or had appeared to be during the previous fifteen years. At the termination of a sanguinary Revolution, during which men had fallen on each other with actual frenzy, we saw them suddenly seized by the powerful hand of Napoleon, and under the empire calmed down into a complete moral and physical immobility, and soon despairing of being able to effect anything against each other, they fell into a species of forgetfulness of themselves, their passions, and their opinions, and renouncing all interest in public affairs, cast at most from time to time an anxious look at the heroic drama that was being enacted before their eyes. The sudden fall of Napoleon, freeing them from the grasp of his iron hand, had awakened in different classes sentiments as diverse as their positions; the royalists experienced an unmixed joy, the revolutionists a joy mingled with anxiety, and the Bonapartists the stunning effect of a sudden and violent blow. But these sentiments soon underwent some modification. The royalists, when the first flush of joy was passed, found that the reality fell much short of their hopes, and they were filled with jealousy, disputing amongst themselves who should have the largest portion of the booty. Taking advantage of the return of liberty, which at the first return of the Bourbons existed only for their advantage, and making use of it to pour forth their hate against the Revolution and the empire, they soon made the revolutionists regret their momentary joy, and extinguished in the Bonapartists the stunning effect of their fall, which had suspended the power of self-defence. The apparent unity that had subsisted under the empire was thus suddenly exchanged for extraordinary commotion, and as if our history had retrograded seventy years, there were now seen confronting and measuring each other with angry eyes nobles and citizens, religionists and philosophers, priests who had taken the oath and priests who had not taken the oath, soldiers of Condé and soldiers of the republic, all ready to come to blows,

if the government, instead of restraining and calming them by giving an example of cool good sense, had excited or even allowed them to follow their own inclinations.

In the first place, the spectacle of these dissensions was presented in the court itself. The Count d'Artois, deeply touched by the censure poured out on his short administration, afflicted at hearing the disastrous peace that had been concluded attributed to the convention of the 23rd April and his imprudent promises, blamed for the difficulty experienced in collecting the taxes—and these reproaches were encouraged by the king—had taken refuge at St. Cloud, where he was more vexed than sick, and allowed his friends to form a group of malcontents, around whom all those rallied who thought that too much had been conceded to the revolutionists. And these malcontents did not hesitate to say publicly that the king was a kind of Jacobin, who had again adopted the ideas he had entertained in his youth. The higher classes of the nobility, who, though filling nearly all the high offices of the court, wished to hold also the State appointments, which they were forced to share with the imperialists, were far from being satisfied. They mingled their grief with that of the nobility of the bar, who, it must be confessed, had seldom any sympathies in common with the higher nobility, but who were now offended that they had not been allowed to draw up the new constitution, which they would have done according to their own ideas and for their own advantage. In the same way the surviving members of the ancient parliament had addressed a secret protest to Louis XVIII. against the Charter. The provincial nobility, at least those who were not rich, had come in crowds to Paris, to petition for the restitution of their property, and to solicit, *en attendant*, places of every kind, and of every amount of salary. But the minister of finance received these gentlemen very roughly, for he believed that public offices ought to be given to those who had experience in business; and they were received with disdain by the minister of the interior, who found them a bore. They consequently flocked round the Count d'Artois, saying that the government was abandoned to revolutionists, and that if things went on in that way a little longer, France and royalty would be again sacrificed.

Whilst that within the walls of the Tuileries there was thus formed a royalist party, *more loyal than the king*, as was remarked at the time, an entirely opposite species of party was being formed at the Palais-Royal, but it must be said, without the personal sanction of him who was reported its chief—this was the Duke d'Orleans' party. This prince, an old and valiant soldier of the republic, well-informed, talented, and prudent,

had acquired in an eventful life a precocious experience. He understood the character of the emigrants thoroughly, laughed at them without compunction in the retirement of his own family, and was so happy at revisiting his native land, and recovering there a princely rank and a large fortune, that he thought little of anything else, his sole solicitude being to protect himself against the malice of the royalists, who were as inimical to him as they had been to his father. Whilst that he was solely occupied with his children, with their education and their scattered patrimony, taking especial care to avoid making partisans, the royalists made them for him in thousands, by persecuting him with their hatred, and so rendering him an object of interest and confidence to revolutionists of every shade. Thus on the right hand of the king was the Count d'Artois, surrounded by the malcontent royalists, and on his left the Count d'Orleans, surrounded by the malcontent liberals, whom he did not seek after, for he thought only of his family affairs, whilst the royalists were unintentionally working out serious political events.

In another sphere, the high dignitaries of the empire, who could not have consistently rallied round the Bourbons, or who had not wished to do so, having recovered a little from the effects of their fall, began to unite, but prudently, and without making any hostile demonstration. There were M. de Caulaincourt, whom even the patronage of the Emperor of Russia had not been able to get admitted to the peerage, and who kept aloof, deeply touched by the disasters of France and the calumnies of which he was the object, in connection with the abduction of the Duke d'Enghien; the Prince Cambacérès, more taciturn than ever, and making no greater display than receiving at his table some old friends as discreet and sensual as himself; the Dukes de Bassano, de Cadore, de Gaëta, de Rovigo, the Counts Mollien and Lavalette, talking within their own circle of the catastrophe they had witnessed, regarding with pardonable satisfaction the embarrassment of their successors in power, and visiting, but with considerable precaution, the Queen Hortense, who had remained at Paris to defend, under the patronage of the Emperor of Russia, the interests of her children. This princess had lately lost her mother, the Empress Josephine, who died of a chill to which she had exposed herself in receiving the Emperor Alexander at Malmaison. She was universally regretted by those who knew her, on account of the elegance of her manners and the goodness of her heart; she was regretted by the public, who saw in her death an additional calamity amongst many. In fact, of the prisoner of Elba's two wives, one had just died of exhaustion and trouble of mind, the other had returned crownless, and with a portionless child, to the

dominions of her father, scarcely acknowledged as a princess, though archduchess of Austria by birth, and already half forgetful of the husband with whom she had shared the sceptre of the world!

Marshal Soult had also come to Paris, deprived of his command, and deeply irritated at the preference shown to Marshal Suchet, of which he complained with a want of prudence that he seldom displayed. Marshal Massena, too, was at Paris, almost forgetting the injustice of Napoleon in beholding the misfortunes of France, offended at being treated as a foreigner, who should be naturalised in order to become a Frenchman, and living in silence and isolation, never seeking at the Tuileries the flattery which all the marshals were sure to receive; and lastly, there was at Paris the Marshal Davout, proud of the resistance he had made at Hamburg, caring little about what the royalists and the adverse generals said, and preparing in his estate at Savigny, whither he had retired, a memoir, in which he narrated with daring frankness all he had done in fulfilling his military duties.

In the same class with these men, but not mixing with them, were the revolutionists of every shade of feeling who, though by no means hostile to the army, lived apart from it, and especially from its chiefs. Pleased for a moment, as we have said, at the downfall of the empire, they now began to regret it. The revolutionists who had most compromised themselves, such as Tallien, Merlin, and others, assembled at the house of Barras, who was still tolerably rich, and deplored in common the destruction of liberty, which they attributed to Napoleon. With these were united some few military men, such as Marshal Lefebvre, who, though distinguished and rewarded by Napoleon, had conserved his ancient opinions, and beneath whose glittering marshal's uniform there beat the heart of a republican. The personages we have just named found in the suburbs a certain number of the lower classes who sympathised in their opinions, the old bound by memories of the past, the young by tradition, less daring than they had once been, but ready to resume their former attitude under the influence of events and the excitement of political discussions. Above and apart from these were the more decided revolutionists, who had been at first well treated by Napoleon, but who were afterwards separated from him, either in consequence of their convictions or some error in conduct. The greater number of these were senators, excluded from the peerage because they had voted the death of Louis XVI., and on this account called *the voters*. The two most important were MM. Sieyès and Fouché—the former, ever morose and solitary in his habits, approving the Charter, but doubting whether it would be put into

execution; the latter, on the contrary, always untiringly active, keeping up an acquaintance with all parties, endeavouring to win the confidence of all, and though ill recompensed for the services he had rendered the Count d'Artois, he sought the count's friends in private, and endeavoured to persuade them that he alone amidst existing difficulties was capable of guiding and saving the Bourbons.

But France was not exclusively composed of partisans, dreaming of the re-establishment of the ancient régime, or regretting the excesses of the Revolution, or deploring the rich appointments held under the empire. There were both amongst the middle-aged and the well-informed young men brought up in the imperial schools a considerable number of distinguished persons, who turned their thoughts to the future, uninfluenced by the prejudices or interests of any epoch, and seeking liberty under the Bourbons, whom Napoleon's errors had reinstated on the throne of France, a circumstance not to be regretted, should the restored dynasty only know how to accommodate themselves to the opinions and circumstances of the French people. These men assembled most frequently at the house of Madame de Staël, who had returned from the exile in which Napoleon's gloomy suspicions detained her. She pined for Paris, and Paris longed for her, for she was the soul of the French intellectual world, receiving in her salons conquerors and conquered, and endeavouring to persuade both parties that they must try to acquire, under the restored Bourbons, British liberty. M. Benjamin Constant had also returned from exile, and was preparing, with his fluent and brilliant pen, to throw light on constitutional questions. M. de Lafayette had issued from his retreat at Lagrange at the appearance of the first ray of liberty, and it was not without some degree of pleasure that he again beheld the Bourbons, under whom he had passed his youth, and whom he was disposed to serve if he found them inclined to serve the country. These were the most distinguished members of this society, which was frequented by the most talented and most esteemed men in Paris, and it was here that party took its rise which has been since known as "the constitutional party."

The well-minded citizens of Paris sympathised with this class more than with any other. The bourgeoisie were peacefully disposed, moderate, and disinterested, not seeking government places, but solely anxious for the prosperity of trade. They had become familiarised with the idea of the return of the Bourbons, since the necessity of their return had been proved; they had placed their hopes in them, especially in the king, desiring with peace a prudent liberty—that which consists in being able to prevent governments from destroying them-

selves. The bourgeoisie of Paris offered up their best wishes for the Bourbons, and were ready to afford them an efficacious support by means of the national guard, of which they formed the principal part, provided that their opinions, sentiments, and dignity were not too rudely hurt. Offspring of the Revolution, but unsoiled by guilt—not having contracted either criminal habits or dangerous ambition—having no other interests than the public welfare, the bourgeoisie of Paris was at this moment the truest, the best, and most popular expression of opinion in France.

In the provincial parts, the same shades of politics, but more decided in the colouring, were to be found; and the same passions, good and evil, with fewer modifications. In Lower Normandy, in Brittany, and in Vendée, the rural populations, so profoundly tranquil under Napoleon, were, so to speak, "up." The Chouans had assembled with incredible celerity under the leadership of their surviving chiefs; they replaced those that were dead, and had in fact assumed arms without knowing what they were about, merely for the pleasure of taking them up and threatening their old adversaries, or, as they said themselves, for the purpose of supporting the king. In their eagerness to obtain arms, they had rushed into the houses of those they called "blues," and taken forcible possession of their muskets. The local authorities entreated them to remain quiet, assuring them that the king was not threatened with any danger, and consequently did not need their assistance; but secret intriguers, for the most part emigrants who regretted their lost property, or who were ambitious of government employments, assured them that they must not believe the prefects, and that the princes were desirous that they should hold themselves in readiness. Their ill-will was especially directed against the holders of national property. This class of persons was much more general in the country districts than in the large cities, though even here there were many who had purchased ancient mansions and convents. Nearly all who had favoured the Revolution of 1789 looked upon the priests and nobles as enemies, and had had little scruple about becoming possessors of their property, which they purchased at a low price, and afterwards rated at its full value. Such persons were especially numerous in Normandy, Brittany, Vendée, and the southern provinces, and now became alarmed for their personal safety as well as for their property. Placing little trust in the sincerity of the local authorities, they had not yet taken up arms, but were on the eve of doing so. The inhabitants of the cities, both great and small, even without being holders of national property, but having still fresh in their memory all the horrors committed by the Chouans,

sympathised on this account with the holders of national property, and constituted what in the west of France were called "the blues," in opposition to the party called "the whites." As to the latter, they employed their time in smuggling, waiting a favourable opportunity for engaging in something more congenial to their taste; they refused to pay the tax on salt, and carried off immense quantities of this commodity from the salt marshes without paying the dues. To all these causes of commotion must be added the passions of the clergy, who were a hundred times more imprudent than any of those who hoped the return of the ancient order of things. The old quarrel between the priests who had *taken the oath,* and those who had *not taken the oath,* sprang up under a new form, that of submission or resistance to the Concordat. Where there existed (as in the diocese of Rochelle, for example) an ancient titular bishop who had not given in his resignation at the command of the Pope in 1802, and had retired into England, the people refused to obey the bishop appointed by the emperor and sanctioned by the Pope. Touraine, Mans, and Perigord offered several cases of this kind. The Concordat was in these places trampled under foot, and denounced as the fruit of the Revolution. The priests who sanctioned it, and who had for the most part taken the oath, fell into great disfavour; people said, that having accepted the civil constitution of the clergy, it was no wonder they found the Concordat quite to their taste. In short, the restitution of Church property was publicly announced. The clergy and nobility declared openly that if the Bourbons, immediately on their return, had not been able to do them justice, it would soon be done; and that in any case the Count d'Artois and his sons ardently desired it, and would ultimately bring over the king to their opinion.

This position of affairs began to cause uneasiness to the bourgeoisie, even to those who, though they had no personal interest in the question of national property, were not uninterested in the question of public order, and would have beheld with alarm any attempt to restore the ancient régime. In the space of two months things had arrived at that point that Nantes, one of the maritime cities most attached to peace and the Bourbons, was become, on account of the Chouanism arising on every side, almost hostile to the restoration. Descending in a southerly direction, there was Bordeaux, which had assumed the title of the "city of the 12th March," because on that day its gates had been opened to the Duke d'Angoulême. Bordeaux was not changed in sentiment, but certainly set up pretensions that did not harmonise with the general interest. In the first place, the inhabitants positively refused to pay the *droits réunis*, asserting that they had not supported the cause

of legitimacy to submit to the ordinances of usurpation; they complained bitterly that the Mauritius had been abandoned, and burst into violent invectives against the English, whom they had at first received with the warmest enthusiasm. The same feelings prevailed at Toulouse, but with certain differences. In this city there was less animosity manifested against the English, because no maritime interests were at stake; but on the other hand there prevailed a violent hatred of class against class, of royalists against revolutionists, because that the nobility, richer and more powerful in an agricultural than in a maritime province, were more frequently placed in antagonism with the bourgeoisie. Throughout the remainder of Languedoc, at Montpellier and Nîmes, the same sentiments prevailed, heightened by the bitterness arising from religious quarrels. The Catholics detested the Protestants, and said they had been excluded by them during five and twenty years from all the advantages arising from the possession of power, and wished to proceed to acts of extreme violence, from which they were with difficulty withheld. On the other hand, the Protestants began to take up arms in self-defence. Nîmes was like a volcano ready to pour forth flames. Some persons of low birth, assuming the right of representing the Catholic nobility, some through natural excitability of character, and others through love of office, pretended to overrule the magisterial authority, and follow no will but their own. They had publicly and in the bitterest language condemned the senatorial constitution, poured forth a thousand imprecations against the Senate, demanded an absolute royalty, and protested against the Charter. At Arles the same line of conduct was pursued, and in the environs the holders of national property had not merely been threatened, but some of the former proprietors had taken forcible possession of their property.*

Marseilles surpassed, if possible, all that we have related of the other cities of the south. It was natural enough that the Marsellaises should refuse to pay the *droits réunis*, but they required besides that the entire commerce of the Levant should be placed in their hands, and to effect this, that they should be emancipated from all the commercial laws that bound the rest of France, that Marseilles should be declared a free city, with permission to trade with the entire world, without being subjected to any of the restrictions established for the protection of the national commerce. Every ordinance that opposed the fulfilment of these wishes ought to be trampled under foot as the work of usurpation; and in order that the king should be free to do what was suitable to his most faithful subjects,

* In this description of the state of France, I follow the reports of the police which were every day laid before Louis XVIII.

it was necessary that he should possess absolute power, unrestrained by chambers or any other institution of revolutionary origin. Consequently, Marseilles execrated the Charter, and with the Charter the English, who had deprived us of the isle of France. In combining all the follies that triumphant royalism gave vent to in Vendée, at Bordeaux, Nîmes, and other places, it would be difficult to equal the extravagances that found expression in the city of Marseilles, at present so enlightened and so prosperous, but at that time wrought to madness by twenty-five years of fearful sufferings.

Advancing towards the Rhône, we find the same violence exhibited at Avignon, with a spirit of vengeance easily conceivable in a district that had witnessed the crimes of La Glacière. Mounting still higher, along our great southern stream, that is to say, at Valence and at Lyon, these sentiments gradually assumed an almost opposite character. Though there were at Lyon ardent royalists filled with the remembrance of the siege of 1793, and united under M. de Précy, who had gloriously directed that siege, and had on that account been invested with the command of the national guard, there were also numerous imperialists strongly attached to Napoleon through gratitude for the benefits he had conferred on their city and the prosperity of their manufactures during his reign, and these dispositions were confirmed by the presence and bad conduct of the foreign troops. More north still, in Franche-Comté, Alsace, Lorraine, Champagne, and Burgundy, provinces that had been the theatre of the war, the spirit of patriotism had suffered so severe a check that the people had become Bonapartists. During the revolution these provinces, which were generally more tranquil than those of the centre and south of France, had never fallen into extreme opinions, but had maintained the moderate sentiments of 1789. Though they had once admired Napoleon as the regenerator of France, and the conqueror of Europe, they had afterwards deplored his errors, and separated from him without hesitation. But seeing him in 1814 struggle with so much glory and perseverance against the European coalition, sharing with him the anxieties and sufferings of the war, they had become again attached to his government. They had conceived an abhorrence of the foreign armies, and had grown cold towards the Bourbons, because they had returned in company with the foreigners.

The eastern provinces exhibited towards the king's government a positive coldness, less injurious, however, than the ill-regulated zeal of the royalists in the west and south. To all these elements, fermenting at the same time, there was now added another, in the number of old soldiers who returned to France, either as discharged prisoners, or because of the

evacuation of the foreign fortresses. About twenty thousand men had returned from Spain by Perpignan; twelve thousand had returned through Nice and Toulon from Genoa and Tuscany; more than thirty thousand, composing the Italian army, had returned through Chambéry; eighty thousand at least, that had evacuated Wurzburg, Erfurth, Magdeburg, Hamburg, Antwerp, Bergen-op-Zoom, returned by Strasburg, Metz, Maubeuge, Valenciennes, and Lille. More than forty thousand, who had outlived the horrors of the English hulks, had landed at Dunkirk, Calais, Boulogne, Dieppe, Havre, Cherbourg, and Brest. A large number of prisoners to be restored by Russia, Germany, England, and Spain, was also expected. All these men wore the tricolor cockade, which no remonstrance could induce them to lay aside. Old soldiers, for the most part, who nourished in the depth of their hearts the sentiments that prevailed in their country when they quitted it, they could not cease, though they had been often irritated against Napoleon, to regard him as the representative of France, of her greatness, and her independence; whilst in the Bourbons they saw the very opposite. The idea that had taken root in their minds was, that in their absence foreigners, aided by some nobles and priests, had effected a revolution, alike disastrous to France and the army. This idea infuriated them, and filled them with contempt for a government which they declared was the tool and accomplice of foreigners. These assertions, though apparently true, were radically unjust, for, as we have already remarked, if the Bourbons in 1814 returned to France in the train of foreigners, it was a misfortune not attributable to them, but to Napoleon, whose fault it was. But this evident truth was disregarded, and the Bourbons were looked on by the old soldiers as the agents and allies of the European coalition.

From what has been said, it is easy to conceive the difficulty the king's government had to encounter in endeavouring to bring under its authority the troops that were returning to France. At Strasburg some officers who were present at a theatrical representation got up for the occasion, jumped upon the stage, and silenced the royalist songs that displeased them. At Metz and in other cities the tricolor flags and the eagles were displayed in the processions of the Fête Dieu. On the sea-coast, where these soldiers had landed from England, they carried their violence so far as to wish to remove the cross of St. Louis from the breasts of our old naval officers. At Rouen they hooted General Sacken, who, however, as governor of Paris, had acted with extreme moderation. They entered the shops of printsellers, and tore up the caricatures that ridiculed Napoleon, and frequently did not respect the portraits of the king and the princes. They sometimes went so far as to sing

seditious songs, and at Paris especially there was much difficulty in restraining them. The Austrian troops having stuck branches of foliage in their caps, the French soldiers took offence, believing the manifestation was intended to indicate a triumph over them. The Prince de Schwarzenberg deemed it necessary to publish a note explaining that the manifestation was not meant as an offence, but was merely a customary usage amongst the Austrian troops when in the field, which, however, would be now interdicted them.

The greater part of these soldiers had returned to France after having suffered severely. There were many amongst them who had not received their pay during six, twelve, and eighteen months. They did not blame the empire, but the restoration, for this, because payments were not made at the war office as quickly as they wished and as their wants demanded.

The system of flattering the heads of the army did not produce the effect of calming and subduing the army itself. Our soldiers did not think themselves at all honoured in the persons of their generals when they saw Berthier, Oudinot, Ney, Macdonald, Moncey, Augereau, Serurier, and Mortier seated at court between the king and the princes. They, on the contrary, looked on these honours as the price of a dark treason. Marmont, who was certainly guilty, but much less so than was believed, was in their eyes the type of this imaginary treason, to which they attributed our reverses; and reports were every day circulated of his having been killed in a duel, false reports, which were constantly contradicted and constantly renewed, but which expressed the wishes of those with whom they originated. The king and the princes, in flattering the heads of the army, whom they did not love, only compromised their own dignity and that of the marshals, without gaining the affections of the officers and the soldiers.

Numbers of officers had flocked to Paris to learn their fate, and enjoy the consolation of lamenting together over the change that had taken place in their condition. The repeated commands of the war minister, ordering them to return to their regiments, and threatening them with the loss of their commissions if the military inspectors did not find them at their posts, were disregarded. The officers took advantage of the general confusion, and remained at Paris, flocking to the theatres and public places, where they ridiculed and insulted the Bourbons beyond measure. In the same category were numerous government functionaries, who had returned from the surrendered provinces, custom-house officers, tax-gatherers, and police agents, who, far from laughing and jesting, wept over their misfortunes. Altercations were of daily occurrence, and

in these affrays our soldiers were not worsted, whilst the government, not daring to employ foreign troops to re-establish order, made use of the national guards, who, with their pacific and respected uniform, restored peace by their presence and advice. The rioters obeyed, because this guard was in their eyes the representative of the nation assembled to protect the public peace, frequently participating in the sentiments of the young men whose sallies they repressed, but who appreciated better than they the necessity of submitting to circumstances, and of looking to the future, and not the past, for the happiness of France.

We may judge from this plain description the state of the public mind, the embarrassments of every kind that threatened the new government, the difficulties of the task they had to fulfil, and the serious errors into which they were liable to be betrayed. The first object to be considered was the army, which was to undergo reductions, inevitable in a country passing from a state of war to one of peace, and at the same time manage the more difficult operation of reducing an immense military establishment to a very limited one, and effecting these changes in a manner that the army should attribute them neither to ill-will nor a partiality for the principles of the emigration. The government required equal caution not to offend the revolutionists, whose presence recalled so many calamities, and who, if offended, might join the imperialists, which they had not yet done. It was necessary to tranquillise the holders of national property, who constituted a considerable portion of the landed proprietors, and not make them Bonapartists. It was necessary to restrain the clergy who had remained faithful to the Bourbons, and prevent them from maltreating the clergy who had taken the oath, and who formed the larger number, and not alarm the latter about the Concordat, which was their sole guarantee. In fact, the object of the government was, not to make implacable enemies of these diverse restless classes, all ready to become malcontents, regretting the empire which they did not love; and these precautions were doubly needed whilst the principal and almost sole support of the government was the wise and prudent bourgeoisie, who entertained only moderate wishes, and who, were their good sense, justice, and love of equality wounded, might be tempted to join the malcontents. But, considered dispassionately, what a severe task was imposed on the Bourbons, and the emigrants which had returned with them. They were called upon to prefer the soldiers of Napoleon to the soldiers of Condé; they were expected to show a preference to men who had been the executioners of some of their friends, or who had purchased the property of others for a trifle; they

were expected, we say, to prefer these men to their own friends! They were expected to prefer the priests who had conformed to the principles of the Revolution to those who had refused to recognise such opinions. They were expected to feign for classes that had sprung up in their absence as much regard, because they were rich and intellectual, as they felt for the nobles with whom they had lived at court in their youth, and in exile in their riper age! In short, in one word, it was expected that the Bourbons should extinguish in their bosoms memory and feeling, in order to appear in the eyes of France what they were not! It must therefore be admitted, even whilst animadverting on the faults of these princes, that it would have been very difficult for them to do otherwise than they did. Revolution, counter-revolution—alas! terrible events, alike distant from the True, the Just, the Possible. The one overshoots the mark, the other falls short of it; neither stops at the right point. But, as an excuse for both, it must be admitted, that if the former has the merit of embodying the spirit of the times, the latter possesses that of obeying the noblest sentiments of the human heart, respect for antiquity, and a tender affection for the past.

The question that pressed most on the consideration of the government was what concerned the army. It was first proposed that the soldiers should receive their arrears of pay, of which they stood very much in need, and which brokers sometimes advanced them at the very door of the war office at a profit of 50 per cent. But though the minister of finance intended to discharge all the debts of the State, he could not hope to discharge arrears out of the current resources, which scarcely sufficed for the most urgent necessities. Of these arrears a sum total had been formed, which it was proposed to pay by raising credit, which would necessarily involve some delay. However, an exception had been made in favour of the soldiers' pay, and M. Louis had determined to devote immediately to that object thirty or forty millions in ready money. For this purpose he had opened to the war minister the necessary credit; but two causes delayed the employment of these means. In the first place, the difficulty of bringing from a distance the accounts of the different regiments; and secondly, the difficulty of reorganising the war office. General Dupont had not hesitated a moment to restore the mansion occupied by the war office to its former owner—it was the unsold property of an emigrant; he had transferred his offices, and this removal, together with changing several clerks, and combining into one the two departments of the personnel and the matériel, which under the empire had been kept distinct, had occasioned a momentary confusion in the administration that had retarded business. However,

General Dupont had made every effort to pay some accounts sent in from remote garrisons, and he also assisted the discharged prisoners that were thronging into France.

These preliminaries concerning the army having been arranged, it was necessary to proceed to its definite organisation, and reduce it to proportions more suited to the extent of our territory and the state of our finances. At one time, by reason of desertions, a fear was entertained that there would be a dearth of soldiers. The conscripts of 1815 had been authorised, as we have seen, to return to their homes; and as to the conscripts drawn anterior to that period, and who had deserted in crowds, the ingenious pretext had been devised—in order to avoid severe measures, and to retain the right of recalling them in case of need—of considering them on a limited leave of absence. But the return of the garrisons and prisoners had soon dissipated the fear of suffering from want of men, and had restored to France 400,000, that would enable the government to dispense with the conscription for a long period, and declare the system provisionally abolished, deferring to a later period the passing of a law on the subject of recruitment. By granting to a portion of these men—for example, the most fatigued—a limited congé, and keeping the others under arms, France would possess a superb army, composed of the best soldiers in the world. But was the government in a position to pay these men, and make a provision for forty or fifty thousand officers, the glorious remains of our long wars?

This question was warmly debated in the royal council, where, as we have observed, the members of the old provisional government and the ministers had seats. General Dupont was summoned to present his project, and he forwarded the command to Baron Louis, in order that the latter might declare what amount of money he was disposed to devote to the army. The minister of finance declared that he could not give a definite answer until he should receive the budget of the different departments, and until he should have succeeded in re-establishing the collection of the taxes. The Duke de Berry, the youngest and most active of the royal princes, and who exhibited a sincere zeal for the interests of the army, pressed the minister of finance to be explicit, and the latter declared he could not promise more than two million francs. For a military establishment comprising more than 400,000 men, soldiers and officers, this was very little, though a soldier does not cost, and certainly did not cost at that time, 1000 francs.* With great economy 200,000 men might have been

* It is a generally received opinion that in France a soldier costs 1000 francs, and that 100,000 cost 100 million. This is an erroneous idea. This calculation was based on the state of our military establishment during the first half of

kept on service, but with the inevitable expenses attendant on the transition from a state of war to a state of peace, it was almost impossible, and the utmost that could be done would be to keep 150,000 men on service. A rigorous economy was imperatively called for, that would not permit any sacrifice to luxury or party feeling.

The next question brought under consideration was the imperial guard; what was to be done with it? To dissolve it seemed difficult and dangerous; to retain without confiding to it the care of the sovereign's person, and thus keep the imperial guard in a species of semi-disgrace, was still more dangerous. However, General Dupont and the princes believed they had found a solution for the difficulty, at once prudent and pleasing. They proposed that the old guard should be retained as a *corps d'élite*, with the same high pay, the same privileges, and an honourable title, without, however, being entrusted with the guard of the king's person, an honour reserved for the household troops. The young guard having been almost destroyed during the war, and the remains consisting of only a single regiment, originally drawn from the old guard, with which it could not be again incorporated, the remnants of both were fused into two infantry regiments, each consisting of four battalions—one regiment of grenadiers, to be called the *grenadiers de France;* another regiment of light infantry, to be called *chasseurs à pied de France.* The cavalry was distributed in the same way into four regiments—one of cuirassiers, one of dragoons, one of light horse, and one of lancers, enjoying the same advantages, and with similar titles, of *cuirassiers, dragoons, chasseurs, lanciers de France.* As to the reserve of artillery, that was broken up and reincorporated with the regiments from which it had been originally drawn. The entire might amount to about 800,000 men, horse and foot, which would cost some fifteen or eighteen million francs. It was a serious question to consider, whether in a great State there ought to be any *corps d'élite;* but the men who governed in those days solved the question, as we shall see, in a strange manner, by creating two of these bodies, one to guard the person of the sovereign, and the other to guard nothing at all, excepting it

the present century, because at that time a budget of 300 millions only maintained 300,000 men. But in this sum were comprised all the expenses of our military establishment, that is to say, the fortresses, the staffs, the matériel, the pensioners, the gendarmerie, and it was by estimating this expenditure as the cost of the men alone that each soldier was rated at 1000 francs. But if, on the contrary, we consider a man drafted into an existing and paid regiment, where the expenses of the staff and matériel are already liquidated, a soldier under such circumstances is far from costing 1000 francs. Eighteen years ago a soldier was maintained in time of peace for about 400 francs. Calculated in this way, 100,000 men, recalled from furlough and drafted into existing regiments, ought to cost 40 and not 100 million francs.

might be the shade of the glorious monarch under whom they had served, whose memory they incessantly recalled to others, and which they could never forget themselves.

The next military question was concerning the troops of the line, and it was necessary to reduce the entire to dimensions commensurate with our finances. The minister proposed to retain ninety infantry regiments of the line, each consisting of three battalions of six companies, and fifteen light infantry regiments, which would make 105 infantry regiments, comprising 300,000 foot soldiers fit for service. These 300,000 soldiers actually existed, and were about being organised when all our soldiers who were detained in foreign parts returned to France. The government not being able to pay more than half, the others were dismissed on unlimited leave, and the men were thus exposed to die of hunger if they did not adopt some trade; and if they did, they would be lost to the army, which would be thus deprived of so many veteran soldiers. How to dispose of the officers was a question that presented still more serious difficulties.

According to the proposed organisation, thirty thousand officers would remain without employment. The war council was deeply perplexed. The Duke de Berry insisted that some means of employing them should be found, but it did not occur to any one, that by cutting off the expense of the imperial guard and the king's military household, 60,000 or 80,000 additional soldiers might be retained in service, the number of officers being increased in proportion. A middle course was adopted for the officers, as there had been for the imperial guard. Those officers that could not be incorporated in the proposed organisation were attached to the regiments; they were promised half-pay, with a right to two-thirds of the vacancies that might occur. This procedure involved the double disadvantage of creating a large class of malcontents, and cutting off nearly all chance of promotion from the officers on actual duty. It may be said that the evil was almost inevitable, but it ought not to have been aggravated by useless expense.

The same system was pursued with regard to the cavalry, but not carried out so strictly. Fifty-six cavalry regiments of four squadrons each were formed, of which fourteen were heavy horse, twenty-one *cavalerie moyenne*, and twenty-one light horse, the entire forming an effective force of nearly 36,000 horse. Twelve artillery regiments were retained, of which eight were infantry, and four cavalry, comprising 15,000 artillerymen; and three regiments of engineers, the entire amounting to about 4000 men. In this service, as for the infantry, the unemployed half-pay officers were attached to the regiments, with a right to two-thirds of the vacancies.

These different services taken together amounted to about 206,000 men, 214,000 including the imperial guard, involving an expense which the minister of finance estimated at 200,000,000 f. This minister, for want of administrative experience, deceived himself strangely, as we shall soon see, for this sum would not suffice to maintain 150,000 men on service. This was evidently not the time to carry out the project of re-establishing the ancient royal military household, and thus creating a body of military nobles, horse and foot, that would cost as much as 50,000 soldiers on actual service, and who would furnish by their luxurious manner of living, painful comparisons with the misery endured by the rest of the army. But there were old gentlemen of ancient family who were devoted to the king, and through poverty, in want of employment; there were young men, filled with enthusiasm, who were desirous of entering by this means on a military career; it was believed that a few thousand brave nobles would be an infallible preservative against future revolutions; moreover, each of these nobles had been allowed to resume the title and rank he had formerly held in the king's household, and there was no need of further discussion—nothing remained but to seek the means of accomplishing a fixed resolution. As to the rest, it was said that a portion of the expense would be borne by the civil list, which certainly might be done, for the civil list amounted to 33 millions, which were equal to 45 millions at the present day. But this was only a weak excuse, for if the civil list could bear such an expense, it would have been wiser to reduce it by that amount, or better still, make it available for the imperial guard, which would have remained faithful, had some little effort been made to win the affections of the men, and the expenses of the guard, thus transferred, would have afforded a great relief to the army budget. None of these simple ideas occurred to the stultified minds of those who were engaged in the discussion of these grave subjects.

General Beurnonville, who had served both before and after the Revolution, was commissioned to organise the royal household. The ancient red companies were re-established under the names of "grey musketeers, black musketeers, gendarmes, and light horse." Each company was to consist of three or four hundred gentlemen, holding the rank of officer, who were only to perform honorary service on days of ceremony, and these were commanded by the highest nobles of the court. The body-guards were also re-established, that formerly numbered four, but which were now increased to six companies, because MM. d'Heavré, de Grammont, de Poix, de Luxembourg, titulars of the ancient corps, had resumed their command, and it was thought desirable to confide two companies to marshals of the

empire. The two marshals selected were Berthier, on account of his high position, and Marmont, whom it was necessary to recompense in some manner for the service he had rendered. This unfortunate man was already much disappointed in his hopes, and not to give him this appointment would have been to justify those who condemned him without mercy.

The officers commanding the six companies of bodyguards were ordered to form their corps by enlisting the provisional royalists and the disbanded guards of honour; they had even permission to take young brave soldiers from the army, with injunctions to select those who, to military proficiency, added sound political opinions, and who would be attracted by the rank of sub-lieutenant which was assured to them. These six companies, each comprising three or four hundred men, were to perform an effective service about the person of the king, dividing amongst them the twelve months of the year. The company of horse grenadiers was re-established, and was given to M. de la Rochejaquelein. There were also re-established the *gardes de la porte*, the *gardes de Monsieur*, &c., &c. To these cavalry troops we must add an infantry corps of about 4000 men, with fifty or sixty cannon. This list, had it been complete, would not have comprised less than from 9000 to 10,000 men, holding the rank of officer in the cavalry, and of subaltern at least in the infantry.

We may easily suppose what annoyance the pride and luxury of such a corps were likely to occasion the mass of the army, especially in comparing the prodigality of which this corps was become the object with the parsimony with which those that were not *corps d'élite* were necessarily treated. A few fortuitous meetings between the officers of the royal household and those of the army were sufficient to involve unfortunate collisions and implacable hates. If to all this we add the restoration of the Swiss guards, which under the empire had only enjoyed a nominal existence, and whose actual re-establishment was certainly desirable, for it was the only means of associating with us a valiant people, obliged by the law of nations to remain neutral—if, we say, we consider all these circumstances, we shall see what a multitude of grievances was heaped on the government, some certainly inevitable, others created voluntarily for the mere gratification of party spirit.

Some other changes were introduced into the army, in order to restore the exterior forms of the period previous to 1789, and to obliterate as far as possible all recollection of the emperor and the empire. In the list of regiments many numbers were unrepresented, because several had been destroyed during the war, others had been disbanded. This circumstance was profited of to change the numbers of all, by transferring

the vacant number to the next regiment, and the number thus left vacant to the succeeding regiment, which induced a general displacement in the series, and entailed on all the regiments the loss of the number under which they had distinguished themselves. This was an attempt to diminish their glory by endeavouring to efface from their minds and those of others undying memories. With the intention of attaching the army to the monarchy by means of certain honorary titles, the first regiment of the line was called "the King's regiment," the second "the Queen's regiment," the third "the Dauphin's regiment," and so through all the royal princes whose names could be given to regiments. In order to furnish the princes with a motive for interfering in military affairs, they were made colonels in the different services. The Count d'Artois was nominated colonel of the national and Swiss guards. The Duke d'Angoulême was appointed colonel of cuirassiers and dragoons; the Duke de Berry, colonel of the chasseurs and lancers. The old Prince de Condé was made colonel of the infantry of the line; the Duke de Bourbon, colonel of light infantry; and lastly, the Duke d'Orleans, colonel of hussars. These titles had been granted by Napoleon to the most distinguished lieutenant-generals of the service, and these gentlemen could not feel otherwise than deeply offended at being thus dispossessed. To soothe their feelings they were allowed to retain the emoluments and to exercise the functions of the rank of which they were deprived. They were appointed inspectors-general of the different regiments of which the princes were made colonels.

But it was not the army alone which needed a reduction proportioned to our territory and our finances; the navy was to undergo a like change, and in this department of the public service the retrenchments were to be still greater than in the sister service. Instead of one hundred ships of the line and two hundred frigates, which Napoleon had laboured to construct, and which, with the immense extent of coast he commanded, he would have been able, in two or three years of peace, to equip fully, we, in time of peace and in the actual state of our finances, could hardly keep up two or three ships of the line and eight or ten frigates, and it was necessary to make proportionate reduction in the matériel and personnel of our navy. As to building new ships, that was not to be thought of for a long time, for the vessels built under the old régime and those remaining from imperial France would be more than sufficient for a war armament. As to the sailors and workmen, maritime commerce offered them a certain means of employment. But the navy officers and engineers would be placed in a most difficult and painful position. For them, as for the military

officers, the expedient of half-pay was employed, with a right to two-thirds of any vacancies that might occur. They were also allowed to serve on board merchantmen without injury to their rights and rank in the royal navy. But these were poor palliatives, wholly inefficacious to soothe the distress of the two services.

One of the dearest interests of the army was yet to be discussed—the Legion of Honour. The Charter had decided that it should be maintained, and nobody would have dared to propose its suppression. But it was necessary to reconcile the existence of the Legion of Honour with that of other orders, ancient and modern, about which it was imperative that some regulation should be made. The Archbishop of Malines—M. de Pradt—who had become grand chancellor of the Legion of Honour, proposed that a new order should be created, entitled "the Order of the Restoration." This order, which would have become within a few days as ridiculous as that of the "Lily," which was conferred on 500,000 persons, was unanimously rejected by the royal council. The Order of St. Louis gave rise to more serious discussion. This was a respectable order created by Louis XIV., for the special reward of military merit, and the insignia of this order still figured on the breasts of some of our old officers who had served in the wars of the previous century. It would be scarcely possible for the Bourbons to abolish the order. M. de Blacas proposed that it should be amalgamated with the Legion of Honour, and the two fused into one order, of which Louis XVIII. should be the creator, the patron, and legislator. The Chancellor Dambray remarked very honestly that such a proceeding would be a violation of the Charter, which had stipulated the unconditional maintenance of the Legion of Honour. The royal council coincided in this opinion. It was decided that the two orders should exist simultaneously, and that in order to popularise the cross of St. Louis, it should be conferred on some of the most distinguished officers of the imperial army, who would thus have two crosses instead of one, and would have the satisfaction of seeing their newly acquired glory consecrated by the justly honoured insignia of the glory of former times.

It was also decided that without proscribing the cross of La Réunion, which recalled vain and even dangerous recollections —the union of territories which under Napoleon had so alarmed Europe—this decoration should not be again conferred on any one. This was a certain means of extinguishing the order. As to the Order of the Iron Crown, which now belonged to the sovereigns of Lombardy, that, as well as other foreign orders, could not be worn in France without the king's permission.

In maintaining the Legion of Honour, it would be necessary

to modify the decoration, for Louis XVIII. and the princes of his family could not be expected to wear upon their breasts a likeness of Napoleon. M. de Talleyrand was the first member of the council who spoke on this subject. Treated in general by Louis XVIII. with a politeness unmingled with the slightest shade of gratitude, he felt that to maintain his position he must endeavour to please, and spite of his personal haughtiness, he did not disdain to give himself the trouble. He proposed that the likeness of Louis XVIII. should be substituted for that of Napoleon on the *plaque* of the Legion of Honour. Marshal Oudinot, with great simplicity, eagerly adopted this opinion. The other members of the council entertaining grave objections to this proposition, but not daring to make them in presence of the king, observed a profound silence. This silence soon became embarrassing for the flatterer who had been so ill supported, and might have become embarrassing to the king himself, had not Louis, with a rather sarcastic smile, appeared to enjoy the confusion of the others without participating in it. Wishing to put a termination to the irksomeness of this mute scene, General Beurnonville proposed that the question should be referred to a special commission selected from the members of the council. This proposition did not put an end to the silence which still prevailed, as if the members of the council entertained sentiments which could not find expression in the king's presence. The Duke de Berry—the only member of the council who was never embarrassed, and the only one for whom, either through affection or fear, the king showed any consideration—spoke out boldly, and made no scruple of saying, that it would appear very strange to see a likeness of Louis XVIII. decorate an order created by Napoleon for services performed under Napoleon, and proposed the likeness of Henry IV., which might, without fear of instituting comparisons, replace all others. The hardihood and good sense of the prince untied the fettered tongues, and M. Ferrand, with a frankness becoming in friends, adopted and supported the opinion of the Duke de Berry. M. de Blacas then proposed, not a likeness of any king, which might suggest comparisons not agreeable to Louis XVIII., but a figure of France. This proposition was too suggestive of republican ideas. Louis XVIII. at length broke the silence which he had hitherto observed, thanked his nephew very much, observed that he was not one of those princes who were desirous of statues whilst they were yet living, and that were he capable of such weakness, the fate of him whose likeness they were about to set aside would be sufficient to correct the folly; but that after having maturely considered the proposal of the Duke de Berry and that of M. de Blacas, he approved the project of adopting

the likeness of Henry IV. The skilful flatterer who had sought to please, saw his flattery rejected on every side—rejected even by him to whom it was personally addressed, but he was not a man to be embarrassed about such a trifle. Like the others, he adopted the opinion of the king, and it was agreed that on one side of the medal of the Legion of Honour the likeness of Henry IV. should appear, and on the other, three *fleur de lis.* It was also arranged that as soon as the change was effected, all the Bourbon princes should wear the cross of the Legion of Honour on their breasts.

The different measures we have just recorded, though dictated, for the most part, by imperious necessity, would have deeply offended the army, even had they not furnished any pretext to malevolence. But considering all that the Bourbons had done merely to please their friends, and the irritation that prevailed amongst military men, and the spirit of injustice consequent on this irritation, it is no wonder that these proceedings were taken in bad part, provoked bitter criticisms, and often even dangerous resistance. The imperial guard still resided at Fontainebleau. The old guards had not been disbanded, but as they were no longer to guard the sovereign's person, neither should they reside at Paris—a privilege so ambitioned by the troops in general. A report was circulated, which was certainly well founded, that even at Fontainebleau the guards were thought too near the capital, and that the infantry would be sent to Lorraine, and the cavalry to Flanders, Picardy, and Touraine. This intelligence produced a great commotion in the ranks, and a number of the soldiers traversed the streets of Fontainebleau, exclaiming *Vive l'Empereur.*

To the Duke de Berry was confided the task of establishing a good understanding between the army and the house of Bourbon, and no person could be better suited to the task. He went to Fontainebleau to visit the guards, who had not yet been honoured by the presence of any member of the royal family. Officers whose goodwill had been won by flattering their ambition endeavoured to prepare him a reception. He was received respectfully and in silence. Cries of *Vive le Roi* were uttered by some partisans, but met with no response. However, the prince, accompanied by Marshal Oudinot, who commanded the infantry of the guards, and by Marshal Ney, who commanded the cavalry, was easy and familiar in his manners, and paid many compliments to the old soldiers. The pains he took had the effect of making them conceal the sentiments which sometimes burst forth imprudently, but did not change them in any degree. It is possible that the king might have won the affections of the guards had he frankly confided his person to their keeping, conferring on them exclusively the

privileges and title of a *corps d'élite;* at least, he would have obtained sufficient influence over them to have been quite safe in their hands. But in re-establishing the household troops, and confiding the care of his person to them, he had irrevocably rendered back to Napoleon the affections of the imperial guard.

Since the departure of the foreign troops, especial care had been taken to garrison Paris with the regiments favoured with new titles, such as the regiments of the king, queen, monsieur, &c. These precautions did not tend to excite a better feeling in the barracks. In these places cries were every day heard of *Vive l'Empereur.* The Duke de Berry made a point of visiting the barracks frequently, but that did not prevent his frequently hearing seditious cries. Not deficient either in presence of mind or quickness of repartee when able to control his temper, he drew near a soldier who during one of his visits had cried *Vive l'Empereur,* and asked him why he uttered that exclamation. "Because Napoleon has a hundred times led us to victory," replied the soldier. "A great miracle, indeed," said the prince, "with soldiers like you." The reply made an impression, and was quickly circulated through the barracks. The prince was highly complimented on his wit, but the sentiments of the army continued unaltered.

But things assumed another aspect when the young men of the household troops appeared in the streets of Paris. Their uniform was very handsome; of this they were proud, as was natural enough; and as they enjoyed the rank of officer, they had a right to the military salute. More than once the soldiers refused this salute, and military punishments had no effect in changing their dispositions. What was still more serious, the national guard became engaged in the quarrel. No sooner was the first corps of the household guard organised than this body supplanted the national guard in the interior of the palace, leaving the latter only the external posts. This was, so to speak, giving the national guards the door, and it would have been better either to deprive them of all their privileges, or leave them all. But a fortuitous circumstance aggravated this exclusion from the interior of the Tuileries. The day the body-guards were first put on duty, they repaired to their appointed post at an hour when the greater number of the national guards were gone to dinner. They took possession of the post without ceremony, putting the arms of the absent soldiers outside. When the latter returned they found their place taken, and their arms displaced without any of the forms usually observed by soldiers towards each other under such circumstances. The national guards complained loudly, and went about communicating their discontent to the neighbouring detachments.

Though what had occurred was only the effect of awkwardness, and not of any intention to offend, nevertheless a general commotion was excited through the ranks of the national guard. The legion, generally posted at the Tuileries, declared that they would not mount guard there again, either within or without the palace, and the effect produced was such that M. de Blacas was obliged to write a letter to General Dessoles, thanking the national guards in the king's name and in the most flattering terms for their services. A banquet was even got up between the bodyguards and a select number of the national guards; but all these measures only served to publish, not to appease the discord.

The king, on his side, continued to show the most marked attentions to the heads of the army. He received Marshal Massena, complimented him largely on his great exploits, and informed him that he should soon be naturalised by an act of the two chambers. The king also received Carnot in his quality of head inspector of engineers, and Admiral Verhuel as a naval officer who had remained in the French service, without seeming to remember that the former was a regicide, and that the latter had defended the Texel to the last extremity. After having made so many sacrifices, it would seem that the Bourbons had need to soothe their wounded feelings at the expense of some great military hero of the day. Marshal Davout was the victim devoted to satisfy the resentments of royalty. His resistance at Hamburg, as we have already said, had offended the allied sovereigns; and as we have observed, this marshal had fired on the white flag, seeing it associated with the Russian. Actuated by these different motives, the Bourbons were strongly irritated against him, and besides, they believed him devoted to Napoleon, which proves how badly they were informed, for the marshal had been in disgrace since 1812. He was consequently the only one amongst the marshals whom the king would not receive. The war minister was commissioned to inform him, that having compromised the French name on foreign service, it was necessary that he should explain his conduct before he could be admitted to court. The marshal received this intelligence with great indifference, and proceeded with the memoir he was writing, to show France and Europe what his conduct had been at Hamburg.

From this moment Marshal Davout, who had been always much respected but very little loved by the military, became suddenly their idol. The Boulevard des Italiens and the Palais-Royal constituted a kind of public meeting-place for the officers who had left their regiments, and who were not in a hurry to return, notwithstanding the repeated orders of the war minister. Some were possessed of personal property, and spent at Paris the

money they received from their families; others had no private fortune, and consumed in a few days their arrears of pay, but preferred remaining in the capital and giving vent to their discontent than to return to their regiments and become what was called half-pay officers. They crowded the Palais-Royal and the Boulevard, put their own construction on every act of the government, ridiculed the impotent king, and contrasted his lumbering heaviness with the rapid movements of the man whose diabolical activity they had lately cursed; they laughed at the king's household troops, and still more at the old emigrants who daily repaired in deputations to the Tuileries, and who certainly afforded abundant food for laughter. Sometimes it was a deputation from one of the Vendean armies, or from the army of Condé, that served so long on the Rhine, or representatives of the celebrated camp of Jales, that appeared in the provincial costume of their time; they visited the king, and then visited Monsieur, and poured out all the feelings of their hearts to the latter; they presented petitions, and returned decorated with the Order of the Lily, or gratified with the promise of a pension. Here was continual subject of merriment for our young officers; and some, with the heedless folly of their age, went so far as to borrow the costume of the soldiers of the old régime, and walked through Paris, followed by crowds of their comrades, whom the sight of this disguise threw into roars of laughter. But these scenes did not always end so jocosely, for duels sometimes ensued, but happily not often, few daring to seek a quarrel with officers of the imperial army, and the princes restrained those who would have ventured. But mingled with these wild jests was a well-founded sadness. We have already spoken of the hundreds of government functionaries, custom-house officers, tax-gatherers, and police officers who had accompanied the troops on their return, shared their dangers, imitated their heroism, and who were, with their wives and children, dying of hunger at Paris. It was only natural that they should join the groups of discontented officers, and the gaiety of the latter heightened the desolating spectacle of their misery. Baron Louis, more solicitous to establish order in the financial department than to relieve these unfortunate men, had the folly to refuse them the assistance which, without adding much to the budget, would have solaced unmerited misfortunes; the consequence was that many committed suicide. This strange combination of scenes, some burlesque, others heartrending, produced an unfavourable effect upon the public mind, and caused much disquiet.

One of the means devised for re-establishing military discipline, and furnishing high appointments to the marshals who had not obtained offices at court, was to place them in the

principal military divisions, with increased powers and rich emoluments. In the first place, the government thought it prudent to disperse the marshals; secondly, the government was well aware that if the marshals were not always pleased with a court where they felt they were strangers, though highly flattered, yet they did not desire the return of Napoleon, and that if dispersed through the provinces, they would endeavour to exercise their authority over the troops, and labour to bring them back to their duty. It was therefore determined to send the marshals to the provinces. At Paris the commander of the military division was placed too near the royal authority to possess much importance. However, a man of determination was needed, and General Maison was chosen, who at Lille had displayed such extraordinary energy, and was not reputed a friend of Napoleon's. The marshals were differently disposed of. Marshal Jourdan was sent to Rouen, where he had unfurled the white flag; Marshal Mortier was sent to Flanders, Marshal Oudinot to Lorraine, Marshal Ney to Franche-Comté—the three latter to the provinces where they were born; Marshal Kellermann was sent to Alsace, where he had always had the command of the depôts; Marshal Augereau to Lyon, where he had recently commanded; Marshal Massena was appointed to Provence, where he was stationed at the time of the restoration; Marshal Macdonald was sent to Touraine, and Marshal Soult to Bretagne. The latter, who had fallen into disgrace after the events at Toulouse, had at first shown considerable irritation; but afterwards yielding to the good advice of General Dupont, had become gradually calmer, and had sent assurances to the king of his sincere loyalty. He had consequently obtained the command of the most royalist province in France, where it was thought his good faith might without risk be put to the proof. We shall soon see the result of these brilliant appointments, of which in the commencement such sanguine hopes were formed.

Whilst such little influence was gained over the soldiers, even in making such great efforts to gain the goodwill of their chiefs, there was still less success achieved with other classes, whom it was necessary to manage carefully to prevent them joining the discontented military. Scarcely was the royal family established in France than a funeral service was ordered for Louis XVI., Marie Antoinette, and the other august victims who had perished on the scaffold. There was certainly no event of the Revolution more calculated to inspire sad reflection than the death of the unfortunate Louis XVI., whose good intentions had been repaid by an iniquitous condemnation, and celebrating a funeral service for him was merely rendering homage to his misfortunes. But when party spirit runs high, what some do in all simplicity, others do maliciously, and the

public pay especial attention to the latter. It was to be feared that this homage to great misfortune might become the source of fresh discord. However this may be, the 16th May was chosen—the anniversary of the death of Henry IV.—and a funeral service was celebrated in all the churches of Paris in honour of the royal victims immolated in 1793. Conformably to the doctrine of forgetting the past, the will of Louis XVI. was read, in which, on the eve of his death, he pardoned in such touching terms all his enemies. But in the provinces, the example which was followed with regard to the ceremony was not observed with regard to the manner of celebrating it. The clergy pronounced funeral orations, and gave utterance on the occasion to incendiary language. The entire Revolution was represented as one long crime, where all, both men and things, were stained with guilt, where everything was to be condemned, even the principles of justice, in whose name the Revolution had been effected, and which had just been consecrated by the Charter.

The royalist press envenomed still more the quarrel, by replying to those who appealed to the oblivion promised by the Charter, saying that the sense in which the government had promised the act of oblivion was, that the authors of the revolutionary crimes should never be judicially punished, but that no promise had been made to silence the public conscience in their regard, or to consider as indifferent acts which were in themselves atrocious, or to suppress, in the eyes of France, tears due to noble victims; that if these testimonies of grief offended the perpetrators of certain crimes, their susceptibility could meet with no attention, as, on the contrary, those persons ought to consider themselves happy in being allowed to exhibit on the soil of France their barefaced impunity, but that they could not be promised either the esteem or silence of honest people; and that if the days of public mourning were disagreeable to them, it was the duty of criminals, and not of the expiators of crime, to hide themselves during those days, which were so short and so rare. We may easily suppose the effect produced by such language, both on the men directly attacked, and on those connected with them, if not by a community of acts, at least by a community of principles.

Having once betaken themselves to inopportune recollections, the royalists did not know where to stop. After Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette came Madame Elizabeth, the Duke d'Enghien, Moreau, Pichegru, and—can it be believed?—even Georges Cadoudal, who, before the bar of public justice, had confessed his intention of killing the First Consul on the road to Malmaison. The priest who assisted him in his last moments was sought out, and commissioned to officiate at the funeral

ceremony. The royalists went further, and had the impudence to announce that the king would defray the expense of the ceremony. This was gratuitously compromising Louis XVIII. with the moderate liberals, who were disposed to regard him as more prudent than his family and his party. This ceremony produced a great commotion amongst the military, who did not conceal their indignation, and so alarmed the police that they thought it their duty to acquaint the king with the circumstance.

Acting in this manner was sure to bind in a common and close bond the revolutionists, even the most moderate, with the military and all the partisans of the empire. Nor were the holders of national property, and the priests who had taken the oath, treated with more circumspection. In reality, the Bourbons were deeply grieved that, being re-established in France, they were not able to restore to the emigrants their property; and they were vexed to hear it said that, now in possession of the Tuileries, they did not bestow a thought on those who were starving because of their devotion to the Bourbon cause. The princes need only possess good and grateful hearts to adopt these opinions and sentiments. But the science of politics, without being either ungrateful or immoral, and solely because it is reason applied to the government of States, is often condemned to make painful sacrifices. But when we consider that the Church property might have been legitimately alienated; when we reflect that the property of the emigrants might have been as justly dealt with—for the emigrants had made war on their country—and that the power of confiscating property, since justly abolished, but which was at that time the law of the land, might have been correctly applied to the acts by which these persons had rendered themselves guilty; and especially when we consider that a general subversion of the ownership of property would have followed the revocation of the national sales, State policy, which was not supposed to feel and reason like the Bourbons, was right to sanction these sales by an irrevocable act. But the Bourbon princes thought as M. Lainé, and wished that the holders of property, sanctioned by law, but opposed by public opinion, should restore this property to the ancient proprietors for a pecuniary consideration. Holding these opinions, it was only natural that the Bourbons should encourage or permit every act conformable to such ideas.

The clergy, still more imprudent than the emigrants, began to hold in the provincial pulpits a language still more dangerous. They preached publicly against the Concordat, against the sale of Church property and the sale of emigrants' property, and carried their temerity so far as to refuse the sacraments to

the holders of such property who refused, when dying, *to make restitution*, according to an expression at that time in general use.

But they did not limit their attacks to the holders of national property: they were equally severe against the moderate clergy —against those that had accepted the Concordat; and they thus awakened dissension in the bosom of the Church. Unfortunately, the constitution drawn up by the Senate had not guaranteed the maintenance of the Concordat; and if anything can give an idea of the service rendered by this body in sanctioning afresh the social and political principles of the French Revolution, it is the subversion that now threatened the religious order of things because the Senate had neglected to ratify the Concordat. In fact, nothing less was contemplated than the abolition of all the changes that the Revolution had effected in the Church, and which had been sanctioned by time, by the law of the land, and by the approval of enlightened men.

We have not forgotten the state in which the First Consul found religion in 1800. A considerable number of priests had accepted the civil constitution proposed to the clergy, either through meekness of temper, through love of peace, or through sincere approval of what was reasonable in this constitution. Others had refused through conscientious scruples, and some through party spirit. The priests who had sworn to observe the civil constitution had at this price retained the right to celebrate public worship. Those who refused had incurred the interdict of the government, but preserved the confidence of the faithful. The former celebrated public worship in the churches in absolute solitude; the latter officiated in private houses surrounded by large congregations. The latter declared every official act of the priests who had taken the oath to be void, and remarried and rebaptized all those for whom the others had performed such services; and so of all the acts of civil life in which religion had a part. But the dissonance did not stop here. Many bishoprics had remained vacant, because the Pope refused to consecrate bishops nominated by the temporal power; and in this confusion of opinions, since believers did not know to whom they ought to listen, the unbelievers took occasion to despise alike the priests who had taken the oath and those who had not taken it. They went so far as to proscribe all, as we have seen, during the epoch called the Reign of Terror. But whilst the convention proscribed the priests, the royalists in Vendée made use of them to excite, keep up, and foment the civil war. Such was the state of the Church immediately previous to the passing of the Concordat. The First Consul, exulting in his then stainless glory and unlimited influence over the public mind, and his

then unrivalled power in Europe, had induced the Pope to sanction all that was reasonable in the civil constitution of the clergy, to make the diocesan circumscriptions coincide as nearly as possible with the administrative, to diminish the number of bishoprics (which was excessive), and proportion them to the number of departments, and accept the double principle of a temporal nomination of bishops by the head of the State, and their spiritual consecration by the Holy See. He induced the Pope, moreover, to recognise the principal social changes that had taken place, such as the discharge of civil functions by civil magistrates, the abolition of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and the alienation of Church property, &c., &c. The First Consul had promised, in return, that the State should protect the Catholic worship, give the clergy suitable incomes, and in a word, confer on them all the distinction to which they are entitled in a country at once religious and enlightened. In short, wishing to put an end to a deplorable schism, the Pope and First Consul had agreed to abolish the ancient personnel of the French Church, and reconstitute it, by selecting from amongst the *assermentés* and the non-*assermentés* clergy—that is, from amongst those who had taken the civil oath and those who had not taken it—those who were most virtuous, pure, and attached to religion and to France. Such was the great treaty of peace with the Church, which did so much honour to General Bonaparte and to Pius VII., because it was conducive alike to the good of the country and the Church; a treaty more glorious and more solid than those of Lunéville, Presburg, and Tilsit; for whilst the latter, the offspring of victory, and short-lived, as the source from which they sprung, have been effaced from the national law of Europe, the former, founded on immutable reason, still subsists, and spite of the exaggerations of certain men, will subsist as long as public worship exists in France, because it is the only rule that an enlightened religion and a policy at once pious and independent can accept.

If there was any single act which tended to strengthen the power of the First Consul and to abridge his passage to the throne, it was incontestably the Concordat. Peace with the Church, peace with Europe, and the civil code, had been Napoleon's three dazzling titles to the empire. The Bourbons in their exile had felt the full force of the Concordat. They had feared, opposed, and hated it more than any other act of Napoleon; and they had, by their influence, contributed very much to prevent the bishops from giving in their resignation to the Pope, as he demanded. In fact, thirteen bishops had refused, and ten or twelve of these were still living. But so conformable was the Concordat to public opinion that these recusants retained no authority, and the prelates nominated by Napoleon

and Pius VII. to the sees whose former occupants had not given in their resignation, had been recognised, respected, and obeyed like those who had been nominated to vacant sees. Some unbending priests obstinately refused to recognise the bishops whose predecessors had not resigned their functions, and were living in London: these received the ridiculous and deserved appellation of *the little Church*, a title that corresponded with their position and importance in the religious world.

Napoleon having, through his own fault, put the Bourbons in possession of the throne, his wisest work was threatened to be involved in the same ruin as his most foolish. In fact, the Bourbon princes, bound by the senatorial constitution, since called the Charter, were obliged, by policy as well as by law, to respect certain principles; but they were free in religious matters, because no provision had been made for the maintenance of the Concordat, and they wished in this particular to restore absolutely the past form of things. And this mode of thinking on the part of the Bourbon princes was very natural, for besides that their religious principles had that tendency, they were urged to it by the importunities of their friends, against whose arguments they could not in this case allege the obligations of an article of the Charter. Add to this that the Bourbons not only detested the Concordat, remembering the evil it had caused them, but they detested the Pope himself, whose complaisance to Napoleon they had not yet pardoned, and whom they regarded in the light of a priest who had taken the civil oath, but to whom they were obliged to be civil, because that his power, like theirs, was based on legitimacy; but they were at the same time determined to abolish all of his works that they could. Let us only imagine the consequences of such an undertaking. We should see the Pope abolishing the existing ecclesiastical dioceses to re-establish the ancient, and a second time demanding their resignation from the bishops, in order to restore those he had formerly dispossessed, thus reorganising the clergy of a country in a spirit of blind reaction, which would be, in other words, only to fall back on the former distinction between priests *assermentés* and non-*assermentés*, which would be reviving schism in the Church, setting the priests at war, and putting the faithful in confusion; whilst the Pope, belying by his own act his infallibility, would have proclaimed himself the most fallible of princes, and the Church would have resold, under threat of excommunication, the ecclesiastical property which the Bourbons had pledged themselves, by the conditions of the Charter, to leave in possession of the actual holders! Nothing but the profound ignorance of the emigrants with regard to all that concerned France could excuse an enterprise which at

every step would have plunged them into inextricable embarrassment and immense danger.

However, being free to make the attempt, the Bourbons were determined to do so; and they began by refusing to recognise certain bishops, or hold any relation with them. Cardinal Maury had already been expelled from his see, because the Count d'Artois had declared that he would not be received by him at Nôtre-Dame the day he entered Paris. Cardinal Maury was not certainly, even according to the conditions of the Concordat, in a regular position; but a like resolution was adopted with regard to many whom the Pope had nominated, under pretext that some had taken the civil oath, and that others occupied sees whose ancient titulars were living in London, after having in 1802 refused to give in their resignation to the Pope. These bishops who had not given in their resignation quitted London and hastened to Paris, where they were made acquainted with the project, which indeed was no longer a secret, of overturning the conditions of the Concordat. All the clergy were informed of the projected change, and immediately in all the sees where there were two titulars schism again sprung up. For example, at Rochelle, as we have already said, the titular appointed by Napoleon in virtue of the Concordat, and installed by the Pope, and consequently possessing the double investiture, temporal and spiritual, was opposed by the ancient titular, who had not given in his resignation. A species of sedition sprung up amongst the clergy. The greater number refused to acknowledge the authority of the modern, but accepted that of the exiled bishop, who opposed the Concordat. This species of schism had made rapid progress in the two Charentes, Dordogne, Vendée, the two Sevres, the Lower Loire, Loire-et-Cher, Sarthe, and Mayenne, so that the people no longer knew what religious authority they ought to obey. Consequent on this disorder was the rule of passion, the only influence that was then obeyed. Sermons were preached against the Concordat, against the priests who had taken the civil oath, and against the holders of national property; so that to the ebullitions of political zeal were added those of a religious character. At the other extremity of France—that is to say, in Franche-Comté—where the public mind, though moderate in political matters, was violent in religious, there arose disorders of a somewhat different character, but quite as serious, and more scandalous if possible. Lecoz, Bishop of Besançon, an ancient constitutional prelate and a priest of high character, had, owing to the firmness of the First Consul, been consecrated by Pius VII., and recognised as one of those elected in virtue of the Concordat. He had thus received the twofold installation of the temporal and spiritual powers. He administered

his diocese with piety and propriety, but he had given asylum amongst his flock to several priests who had taken the civil oath, without displaying either vindictiveness or partiality towards the others. In short, in his case there did not exist the pretext which the existence of an ancient titular who had refused to give in his resignation might furnish. Yet a kind of interdict had been pronounced against the Bishop of Besançon, and the people, without refusing him a material obedience in favour of a non-existing competitor, shunned him as a criminal, and refused to see, not only him, but all the priests belonging to the accursed class of *assermentés*. The prefect was the first to give this lamentable example.

Though the French clergy throughout the kingdom, in the thoughtlessness of their conduct, only acted in conformity with the proceedings of the government, yet they carried things so far as seriously to annoy and embarrass the government. In fact, it was impossible to revoke the Concordat without the sanction of the Pope, and those who through zeal for the Church had revolted against her decrees, could not, however, so far ignore her existence as to wish to act independently of her authority. It was therefore a matter of absolute necessity, whilst the revocation of the Concordat was being negotiated with Pius VII., that the existing religious authorities should be recognised, under penalty of inducing a general anarchy, for in some parts of France there were persons ready to expel certain priests by violence, and to dispossess the holders of national property.* The Abbé de Montesquiou, who clearly foresaw the consequences of such conduct, pointed out the danger to the king, and obtained authority to write a letter to the Bishop of Rochelle, who was actual titular in virtue of the twofold nomination by the emperor and the Pope, telling him that he ought to exact obedience from the priests of his diocese, that those who entertained scruples had only to resign their functions, and that if secular authority was needed to secure their obedience, this authority was at his command. But the silence observed in this letter with regard to the Concordat proved that the government regarded this treaty only as a provisional regulation of temporary obligation, and that they were inclined to afford the unfortunate bishop a purely physical and by no means a moral force. Consequently the letter, written rather for the information of Paris than of Rochelle, had no influence whatsoever, and the police found it necessary to notify to the king its complete inutility.

* It has sometimes been denied that things had reached this extremity, especially in what regarded national property. It is only necessary to read the police reports laid before Louis XVIII., and the correspondence relative to ecclesiastical affairs, to perceive that there is nothing more than the exact truth in the description we have made.

Meanwhile negotiations were being carried on at Rome. The king had selected M. Courtois de Pressigny, the venerable Bishop of St. Malo, and appointed him ambassador-extraordinary to the Holy See. His instructions were as follows. Whilst conserving towards the Holy See the respect which the house of Bourbon could never refuse, Pius VII. was at the same time to be made gently to understand that he had been too indulgent towards the usurper, but that the Bourbons, in consideration of his sacred character and his misfortunes, were willing to forget this; but that if they showed such consideration, he would be expected, on the other hand, to erase all traces of his weakness, by ignoring what had taken place, even with his concurrence, since the entrance of the French into Italy, a proceeding that would wholly nullify the Concordat. As the immediate consequence of such an act, the Pope was required to immediately reconstitute the ancient sees to the number of 135, to re-establish in these sees the bishops who had refused to resign in 1802, and who were still living, for, as the court of France said, they had been persecuted and exiled during five and twenty years for the true faith, and they had as good a claim to return to their diocese as Louis XVIII. had to return to Paris, or the Pope to Rome. Pius VII. was, in fact, requested to re-establish a circumscription that the Church herself had pronounced to be unreasonable; he was asked to dispossess bishops that he had himself invested, to reinstate those whose dismission he had demanded, and who had disobeyed him, and he was required to act thus a second time in twelve years by those who had declared his conduct overweening and illegal when he had first attempted to put these measures into practice! What deplorable and scandalous contradictions to impose upon an unfortunate Pontiff, whose moral authority ought to have been dear to princes whose interest it was to exalt that divine right from which they pretended kingly power had emanated!

But whilst this embassy was in preparation, reason was not more influential at Rome than at Paris, and Pius VII., wishing to modify the Concordat on some points that touched the Church of Rome intimately, sent a messenger to Louis XVIII., who arrived at the very time that the ambassador whom we have mentioned was leaving for Italy. After having congratulated the head of the house of Bourbon on the re-establishment of his family on the throne of France, the Pope expressed the greatest confidence in his religious sentiments, and advised him not to accept the senatorial constitution (the promulgation of the Charter was not yet known at Rome); he begged him to refuse freedom of religious worship, and to restore to the French Church endowments in landed property. He, moreover, implored his influence with the other powers to procure the

restoration to the Holy See of the Legations, Ponte-Corvo, and Benevento. (Benevento belonged to M. de Talleyrand, through whom this message was to be transmitted to the king.) He lastly demanded the restoration of Avignon, which was in the hands of the French, and which Louis XVIII., Pius VII. said, could not, as eldest son of the Church, refuse to restore to the Holy See.

It must certainly be admitted that those revolutions that have for their object a remote future, and make no account of the present, are often very unreasonable; but these counter-revolutions that pretend to recall an irrevocable past are not less so; and one is unavoidably struck with this truth in beholding Louis XVIII. demanding from the Pope the revocation of the Concordat, whilst the Pope in return requires of him the restoration of Avignon.

Fortunately, the pretensions of neither the one nor the other had any chance of meeting serious attention; but the agitation excited in many parts of France had not yet subsided, and there still remained the bad effects of many imprudent acts committed in religious matters, which France was disposed to take in very bad part. Of this there was at the very time a sad and vexatious example.

The Count d'Artois, and the Duke and Duchess d'Angoulême, had been much grieved on their return to France to see the Sabbath so ill observed, and to see on this day appointed for rest and prayer the shops open from early morning, and men often engaged in the public works until evening; besides, places of public amusement were more accessible and more frequented on the Sunday than on any other day of the week. They were surprised, returning fresh from England, where life is, as it were, suspended on Sunday, to find Catholicism less observant of the precepts of Scripture than Protestantism; and they several times declared to M. Beugnot, chief of police, that it was a revolutionary scandal that ought to cease with the return of the legitimate princes. M. Beugnot, touched by these reproaches, and besides, looking upon Sunday as an institution as respectable in a social as in a religious point of view, carefully rummaged all the edicts of the monarchy, and even all the ordinances of the republic, touching the observance of the *décadis*, and in his researches brought to light enactments which he believed he had a right to revive. Consequently, on the 7th June he issued a police ordinance, prescribing the rigorous observance of Sundays and holidays. In virtue of this decree, the shops were to be closed on Sunday from morning to evening; no workmen would be allowed to appear on scaffoldings or in workshops; and vehicles used for the transport of goods were forbidden to travel. Public-houses and cafés

might be opened after noon, and rooms for public dancing in the evening; chemists only and herbalists were allowed to keep their doors open the entire day. These regulations were enforced under penalties varying from one hundred to five hundred francs, and the confiscation of the prohibited goods.

These decrees proved a total ignorance not alone of the spirit of young France, but of France at every period of her history, for she had always preferred personal to political liberty, not brooking restraint in her easy and often careless gait of going when it pleased her to assume such; inclined to find fault and offer opposition still more in little than in great things; sometimes permitting her government to perpetrate without opposition an act that might decide her fate, and suddenly taking fire about a public show of which she was debarred; ready to become pious under an infidel government and almost impious under a religious one, and yet in reality more sober-minded than any one could suppose who considered only these singular contradictions. A great commotion was raised in Paris when on Sunday an attempt was made to force the shops to shut in the morning which were generally closed only in the afternoon, and to expel the artisans from the workshops which were usually open for the greater part of the day, and to stop vehicles under pretext that what they carried was interdicted, and enforce for these delinquencies severe penalties adduced from edicts published a century before. To call out the national guard for the enforcement of these regulations was scarcely possible, for the men were already fatigued with repressing disturbances of another kind. It was the municipal guard of Paris, though fully occupied with other duties, that was employed on this, which they executed amid the outcries of an active and industrious population.

The effect was nearly the same on all classes, and the government, which the people called a government of foreigners, of nobles, and emigrants, was now called, in addition, a government of bigots; and the fault-finders, who already laughed at its policy, now sneered at its devotion. The public excitement became so strong as to alarm the council, and bring down upon M. Beugnot from the Duke de Berry severe reproaches, couched in a soldierly style.

"You wish," he said, "to get us the reputation of being bigots, and you could not select a more certain means of rendering us unpopular in France."

Louis XVIII., who, without being a bigot, was desirous of the abolition of the Concordat, said that on this occasion measures had been too promptly adopted, and were, to say the least, imprudent.

It was scarcely three months since the Bourbons had re-

turned to France, and already, without any bad intention, but solely because they had not been able to restrain themselves and their friends, they had alienated the army by reductions which were certainly inevitable, but maladroitly effected at the same time as the re-establishment of the king's military household; and they had hurt the feelings of the men still attached to the Revolution by pious ceremonies, certainly due to the memory of Louis XVI., but accompanied by some serious inconveniences, and induced them to join the Bonapartists, to whom they were by no means attached. The Bourbons had completely alienated the moderate-minded clergy, by far the most numerous of their class, by extravagant attacks against the priests who had taken the civil oath, and against the Concordat. The holders of national property had been alarmed by orations, sanctioned from the pulpit, against the sale of Church property, and by numerous remarks that had their origin at the Tuileries. And ill-judged police regulations had exasperated the influential middle class, whose members, without being irreligious, wished to remain free to choose their form of worship or customs of life; to be religious if they wished, or the contrary if it suited them. And so the Bourbons proceeded, establishing an opposition in all things—not alone against the personal interests and intelligence of the people, but against their customs and tastes, and even the peculiarities of the time and country.

These different acts, following each other in quick succession, were to be submitted to a very high tribunal, fortunately a very prudent one, and by no means inclined to bend to court influences; this tribunal was that of the two chambers constituted by the Charter. The king, it must be remembered, had assembled the chambers on the 4th of June, to communicate to them the conditions of the Charter, and put them in a position to proceed with their labours. From that period they had regularly met, and had, in the first instance, laid down regulations by which their debates were to be governed, a labour which ought of necessity to precede all others, for before commencing to deliberate it would be necessary to determine the form of their deliberations. After some discussion this question was decided, and that form of proceeding was adopted which seemed most favourable to the peaceful and serious examination of business. The terrible memories connected with the committee of public safety had brought everlasting odium on permanent committees, which, seizing on certain departments of the government, such as the financial, the war department, foreign or home policy, the magistracy or the police, had established in these departments a kind of sovereignty, and exercised a dangerous, often a sanguinary despotism. But as every

assembly must of necessity be sub-divided, in order to examine each question in the calm of private meetings, the chambers adopted the system of selecting committees of twenty or thirty members, to be changed every month by lot, and these were to examine in a summary manner the affairs submitted to them, and transfer to a commission appointed for the purpose the care of entering more minutely into details, and making a report to the assembly in full sitting. This form of proceeding having been adopted, the rest followed as a matter of course, and it is this mode which has since prevailed, and must always prevail, where a determination exists to escape the tyranny of parties.

These regulations having been agreed to, the two chambers commenced their sittings, and notified the fact to the king. The Chamber of Deputies, formerly the legislative corps, presented five candidates, from amongst whom the king, according to the conditions of the Charter, was to select a president. The king chose M. Lainé, who had the largest number of votes, and who was indebted for this twofold preference to his high talents, his good sense, and the part he had played the preceding December, when, acting as representative of the legislative corps, he so highly excited the anger of Napoleon. The Chamber of Deputies being now fully installed, set to work.

Amid the revival of political passions so long suppressed, the assembling of the two chambers for business was a grave circumstance; and though they were the same that assembled under the empire, the one consisting of two-thirds and the other of the entire of the former members, they held in abhorrence the idea of resembling the former assemblies, and were determined not to relapse into the submission with which they had been so often reproached. Happily, the chambers were composed of prudent, experienced men, imbued with the spirit with which the government ought to have been penetrated. These men had not wished the return of the Bourbons, but Napoleon had become an impossibility; they had recalled the Bourbons as a necessity, and they sincerely wished that these princes should become one with France, such as a prodigious revolution had left her. These men did not wish to hasten events, they had even come to the determination of tolerating many errors, but on condition that the general direction of the government should be rational, and directed towards the proper object.

On the other hand, the government, seeing the chambers in full operation, preparations for which had occupied the month of June, and conscious that certain thoughtless acts would be severely judged in the chambers, began to consider what line of conduct should be adopted with respect to them. M. de Montesquiou, who, as minister of the interior, had a right, and

as ancient member of the Constituent Assembly, believed he had a claim to appear before the chambers and obtain a hearing, gave it as his opinion that the ministers ought to observe an extreme reserve with regard to the chambers, to bring few matters under their consideration, and avoid as much as possible bringing forward questions in which they had a right to take the initiative; and the budget once passed, and the financial system accepted, it would be better to adjourn the sittings to afford rest both to the members of the chambers and the ministers.

The advice thus offered was founded on an opinion more false than true, though very generally received, that the ministers, not possessing the patronage which exists in England, would not be able so easily to manage the French chambers, and not being sufficiently powerful to guide, ought to treat them cautiously.

The Duke de Berry exclaimed against a mode of proceeding which would annul or at least diminish the royal authority; but his remonstrances were disregarded—the ministers were accustomed to his outbursts of feeling; and the advice of M. de Montesquiou was adopted, with the exception that the mode of conduct traced by that minister was to be modified according to circumstances.

But the chambers were determined, under any circumstances, to make the ministers act openly, and declare their policy; and their mode of effecting this object was by acting with vigour themselves. No sooner had the Chamber of Deputies met for business than notices of motions followed each other in quick succession. M. Bouvier-Dumolard—an ancient prefect of the empire, and formerly a member of many public bodies, an honest but hot-tempered man, fond of noisy declamation, and more inclined to speak than his auditors were to listen—proposed a petition to the king, requesting that a law should be passed, declaring that the two chambers were the real parliament of France, and the only public body that had a right to be so called. M. Bouvier-Dumolard wished by this measure to place the two French chambers in the same position as the English chambers, and at the same time reply to a protestation said to have been made against the Charter, and much talked of at the time, which was believed to be the work of the surviving members of the ancient parliaments. M. Bouvier-Dumolard's vague proposition produced no effect, but it might have had, had the protestation to which we have alluded possessed a more serious character. Two propositions followed, which met with more attention.

M. Durbach, one of the members for Alsace, a man devoid of all personal pretensions, but full of fervent feeling, and closely connected with the revolutionists, condemned, as contrary to

the spirit of the Charter, the proclamation of the police concerning holidays and Sundays, and the royal ordinance which placed the press under the same regulations as existed in the time of the empire. He maintained that an inspector of police had no right to levy fines under the pretended sanction of ancient edicts, and that the Charter having promised liberty of the press, it was not conformable either to the text or spirit of that document that the daily press should remain under a censorship. The journals and pamphlets were indeed submitted to a preliminary inspection, which was certainly exercised with much prudence, for the duties of the censorship were discharged by an illustrious philosopher, M. Royer-Collard, who became one of the most distinguished personages of the time, and a writer of great ability. He was a decided partisan of the Bourbons, but a proud, independent, and liberal-minded man. He certainly would not have lent the sanction of his name to a tyrannical exercise of the censorship. Still the censorship did exist; the director of police sometimes summoned the chief editors of the journals, and though limiting himself to admonition, he held them to a certain degree in check, which, however, did not prevent the royalist journals from frequently indulging in the most violent language.

M. Durbach denounced the regulations relative to the press and the proclamation concerning the observance of Sundays and holidays with a coarseness of language to which the assembly was not accustomed, and in consequence of which his propositions were rejected. Still a general feeling prevailed that these propositions were well founded, and would have been supported had they been presented and advocated with more moderation. Some days after, M. Faure, incited by a powerful party in the chamber, brought forward a motion relative to the press alone, begging the king to give instructions for the passing of a law regulating the right of publication. This was saying very plainly that the regulations which had placed this right under a censorship were looked upon as illegal. M. Faure's motion was carried without a dissenting voice.

As to the proclamation concerning the observance of Sundays and holidays, the chambers were embarrassed as to the line of conduct they ought to adopt, for it was a question which did not admit of definite legislation. In passing a law on the subject, it would scarcely be possible to insert any other conditions than those set down in M. Beugnot's proclamation, for the chambers could not declare officially that Sunday should only be half observed, neither could they embody in a legal act the prescriptions that had already so much indisposed the public mind. Not daring to annul them, which would seem

like abolishing Sunday, and not venturing to support them, which would have still more strongly excited public opinion, the question was referred to a commission to be examined seriously and dispassionately.

This promptitude of the deputies in immediately discussing those subjects which occupied public attention proved how much those were mistaken who believed that it would be easy to measure out to the chambers their share in public affairs, and that by a little reserve they could be kept at a distance like a forward person of whom we disembarrass ourselves by not speaking to him on the subject which he is most anxious to discuss. When a legislature decides upon introducing the system of representative assemblies into the government, it must not be done by halves, for these assemblies force the doors that are only half opened to them. If these representative assemblies are to be recognised by a government, let them be recognised frankly, let ministers act towards them with confidence and determination, and they will be able to direct their councils, that is if ministers themselves understand what they desire, and if what they desire is avowable, if they wish it strongly, and if they possess an eloquence powerful enough to inspire in others wishes correspondent with theirs. Under such circumstances these assemblies combine with the government, become interested in its success, advocate measures brought forward by ministers, and are converted from impediments into a sustaining government force.

The government saw clearly that it was impossible to evade the difficulty, and that the Chamber of Deputies, urging the 8th article of the Charter—which declared the press free, with a proviso that abuses should be legally repressed—could not be flung aside like the author of a motion that did not represent the feeling of the country. The first motion, that of M. Durbach, having been rejected on account of the form in which it was couched; and the second, M. Faure's, having been passed unanimously on account of its moderate tone, it was evident that the motion for a law to regulate the press would be incessantly revived, that this motion would be favourably received by the Chamber of Peers, and would inevitably reach the foot of the throne.

The king felt these truths, and the privy council having been convoked on the occasion, the king said—"The first motion was rejected because Durbach spoke too boldly; but the second, being more moderately expressed, passed unanimously. We must therefore yield with a good grace if we do not wish to be forced."

The king's prudent advice was followed. There was a mode of proceeding peculiarly agreeable to the king, which was to

confirm by the passing of a law the existing régime. This régime was that of the empire, which submitted books to a censorship; and as to journals, they were abandoned as vulgar things to the surveillance of the police, who during Napoleon's reign scarcely meddled with their insignificance. But since the fall of the empire, passions had been awakened in the public mind, and the journals, which were their daily expression, having acquired an importance which pamphlets shared according to their different degrees of merit, the police had been obliged to pay more attention to this class of publications than they had previously done. The police endeavoured, but in vain, to moderate the tone of the royalist press, and treated with great indulgence the liberal press, which was still timid; but in both cases frequent interference was needed. This frequent interference soon became annoying and almost insupportable.

M. de Montesquiou, who was commissioned to draw up the bill, did not hesitate to take the imperial regulations as the basis of the measure. He established a distinction in favour of books, which he proposed to treat differently from pamphlets and journals. Books were distinguished from pamphlets and journals by bulk, whose limit was fixed at 480 octavo pages. Every volume of this size was considered a book, and as such exempt from the examination of the censor before being printed. This privilege was accorded to books in consideration of the reflection the author was supposed to bestow on his work, and to the fact that his readers would be of the more reflecting and least numerous class. Those works that consisted of less than 480 pages, whether periodical or not, should undergo a preliminary examination, that is to say, they should be submitted to a censorship, and the publication deferred, if it were believed that their immediate appearance would be attended with any inconvenience. In order to mollify the rigour of this preliminary examination, it was said that the prohibition to publish was only temporary, and that at the commencement of each session a commission of three peers and three deputies should inquire how the censorship had been exercised. This amelioration was of little avail, because as far as concerned newspapers and pamphlets, an adjournment of a few months was equivalent to an absolute interdict. Moreover, the printers were made accountable to the police, and in case of misdemeanour could be deprived of their licence, an arrangement which constituted them preliminary censors of the writings they were employed to print.

This law might not have given rise to any serious difficulty had the government announced that it was a temporary measure, and called for by circumstances at once novel and

grave. But the desire of making the censorship pass for a fundamental institution authorised by the Charter was founded on groundless pretensions, such as the presumptuous Abbé de Montesquiou could alone have put forth. He was confident of success, and received the royal sanction to bring in the bill, whose bases we have enumerated.

He entered the Chamber of Deputies with the bill, accompanied by M. de Blacas, minister of the king's household, and M. Ferrand, minister of State. M. de Blacas appeared as deputy for the king, and M. Ferrand as publicist of the royalist party. The bill could not be introduced under a more respectable escort. The Chamber of Deputies was very much flattered at seeing the crown yield so readily to its wishes, and even before these wishes had received the sanction of the peers. The chamber received the bill gravely and respectfully, and immediately referred it to a committee.

No sooner was the object of this bill made known than the public mind became violently excited. Hitherto the most important questions had turned upon quarrels consequent on the transition from one régime to another. It was the military who complained of the partiality exhibited towards the soldiers of Condé or Vendée, or revolutionists taking offence at the recrimination of royalists, or holders of national property becoming alarmed at the attacks to which an entire class of proprietors was subjected. Or, on the other hand, it was the officers of the ancient régime, the priests, or the emigrants, who complained that the government paid too much court to the soldiers of the empire, or were too indulgent to revolutionists covered with blood, or too patronising to holders of usurped property. But there now arose a question of principle which touched neither the interests nor passions of any party. This measure excited, as we have said, a profound but not stormy commotion in the public mind, and occupied in an especial manner the attention of enlightened men, who were anxious to see all the principles laid down in the Charter carried into operation.

The mode of considering public questions depends in a great measure on the impressions of the moment. The liberty of the press, which has experienced so great a variety of fortunes in France, had at that time a greater number of advocates than even at present, because, instead of having just escaped from the convulsions of the Revolution, the nation was just delivered from the despotism of the empire. The people had learned what uncontrolled authority was capable of achieving, and said that had the public bodies of the State or the journals enjoyed freedom of speech, an ambition-blinded conqueror would not have been permitted to sacrifice in Spain,

in Russia, and in Germany, a million Frenchmen, abandon our natural frontiers, and at the same time destroy himself. In reviewing the past, the disorders of the Revolution certainly stood out conspicuously. But these disorders could not be imputed to the press. In our own days we have seen the press, while the country was quiet and the public mind unimpassioned, excite the strongest commotion; but in 1792 and 1793 the people were moved by the working of their own passions, and their errors were entirely attributable to that source, and the press, when free, reproved the faults of the excited people. Neither the records of the Revolution nor the empire offered any argument against the liberty of the press. Besides, the great events that had recently occurred were a powerful argument in favour of all kinds of liberty. The French Revolution, setting out with ideas the most simple and most just, had in a very short time adopted the strangest views of things, and traversing successively the entire circle of human errors, had ultimately returned to its starting-point of truth, and carried the spirit of repentance so far as to recall the dynasty whose chief had perished on the scaffold. In contemplating such a spectacle, the opinion was universally adopted, that allowing truth and falsehood to enter into open competition, truth would ultimately triumph, and the result of this opinion was a widespread confidence in the good effects of liberty—a confidence unfortunately much weakened in the present day.

We do not now allude to the emigrants, who regarded every free institution as a return to the régime of 1793, nor to the revolutionists, whom the mere aspect of the Bourbons filled with a species of fury. We speak of the peaceful, impartial masses, and of the more intelligent class of men that wished to see France enter on the pathways that had conducted England to liberty and glory. As to the former, they were confiding, and did not think of shackling the press. The enemies of the press existed rather amongst the members of the government, who, adducing their experience, demanded that the press should be restrained in its operations. But the peaceful masses, offspring, for the most part, of the Revolution and the empire, seemed rather to defend their personal position than to maintain a principle. Many royalists even were well disposed towards the daily press, of which they made use against the revolutionists, and many young men, who were at the same time royalists and constitutionalists, did not hesitate to say, that the most precious species of liberty that the country possessed should not be sacrificed to protect some upstarts whose sole anxiety was to secure their own importance and comfort.

In the numerous salons of Paris, where politics excited a

lively interest, this question was warmly discussed, and in general, with sentiments favourable to the press. M. Benjamin Constant defended the interests of the press with pointed wit and powerful argument. The *Journal des Débats*, a journal that had acquired great popularity in the time of the empire, by the only merit then possible, that of literary criticism, warmly advocated the liberty of the press, arguing that the press ought to be particularly dear to the royalists, for had it been free under the empire or under the committee of public safety, a million of Frenchmen would have not perished on the scaffold or in unwise wars.

The committee appointed by the Chamber of Deputies examined the law in this spirit, and pronounced against it. Affecting to find authority for a censorship in the 8th article of the Charter appeared a very insincere assertion. Had the opponents of the press said frankly that the author of the Charter had intended to grant liberty to the press, that he still intended it, but that for the interest of the new order of things a temporary suspension of this liberty was required; if in this way it was admitted that the censorship was regarded, not as a permanent régime, but a merely temporary suspension of a recognised right, the argument might have been listened to.

But the members of the committee were offended and annoyed at hearing it asserted that the censorship was sanctioned by these words in the 8th article of the Charter: "The French have a right to print and publish their opinions, observing at the same time the laws which repress the abuse of this liberty."

This was, in the first place, wishing to make the censorship considered as a principle of the Charter, and next, it was calculated to inspire a doubt as to the sincerity of those who interpreted the text of the Charter, and it was, besides, a puerile subtilty to assert, as was done, that by *repress* was meant *prevent*. In fact, according to the arguments of those who defended the bill, every law which merely punished but did not prevent offences operated in the spirit of vengeance, and not with a regard for the public welfare. To *repress*, therefore, in the true legislative language, meant to *prevent*. This subtilty irritated by its want of frankness.

In reply to these objections it was said that every law prevented by the fact of repressing crime; that in punishing past misdemeanours the law prevented future offences by the fear of punishment; that the law could in no other way prevent offences; that every action must be accomplished before it could be legally pronounced either good or bad; that otherwise all human actions should be arrested at the commencement, lest they might terminate in evil; that all free action should be interdicted to mankind; that life should be, so to speak, suspended, did the

law take cognisance, not of an accomplished, but a possible act. But putting aside all these quibbles, the question was boldly asked, what was meant by the censorship? and whether it was not a suppression of the liberty of the press? whether, in those countries where the liberty of the press was ignored, the intervention of the government was not limited to a preliminary inspection of works, in order to pronounce upon their fitness for publication? But did not the Bourbon government, in imposing a preliminary examination, annul the liberty of the press, which was a fundamental principle, and almost identical with parliamentary freedom of discussion; and did not this government, within two months after the publication of the Charter, abrogate one of its most essential articles, and that, too, when no important change had taken place in the country, nothing that could reasonably alarm the government, but, on the contrary, when the most fortunate revulsion of feeling had occurred —when, notwithstanding the many interests injured, and the many acts of imprudence committed by the dominant party, France, though at first astonished at the return of the Bourbons, had submitted to their sway, and had given efficacious support to their government.

These were powerful arguments; but the committee was offended by the obstinacy exhibited in maintaining that the censorship was sanctioned by the Charter, for apart from the falsehood, there was the wrong of wishing to give the censorship the weight of a principal and permanent institution. The committee might have been appeased by a sincere avowal of what the government desired, and by the request of a temporary suspension of the liberty of the press. There was amongst the members of the committee a man who, though advanced in life, was full of vigour, endowed with high intelligence, sincere, courageous, possessing all the southern vivacity of temperament, and enjoying a brilliant literary fame. This man was M. Raynouard. He had shared with M. Lainé the honour of opposing Napoleon in the session of the preceding December, on which occasion he had given utterance to sentiments as inflexible as high-minded. He was one of those enlightened men, so numerous at that time, who were desirous of a monarchy tempered with liberty, who wished the return of the Bourbons, but wished to see them restrained by the conditions of a judicious constitution. He was, besides, an author, and as such, interested in the liberty of the press. He possessed great influence with the other members of the committee, and proposed, as a punishment for the obstinacy exhibited in maintaining the bill in its original form, that it should be rejected. Some of the members, though acknowledging that he was right, feared to give the government too severe a check, and proposed

to do what the ministry ought to have done, that is, to declare the liberty of the press a fundamental principle of the Charter, but that, under existing circumstances, it would be temporarily suspended. But M. Raynouard was not satisfied with such a concession. He persevered in his motion, carried the rejection of the bill by a majority of one, and was appointed to make a report of the resolution come to by the committee.

The minority, on the contrary, proposed the adoption of the law, with the three following amendments:—1st, That the line of demarcation between works exempt or not exempt from the censorship should be changed; that works of twenty instead of thirty sheets (320 pages instead of 480) should be dispensed from the preliminary examination; 2nd, That the censorship should only last to the end of 1816; and 3rd, That the opinions of the members of the two chambers should not be obnoxious to the censorship.

Great numbers flocked to the palace, where the sittings of the chambers were held, on the day M. Raynouard presented his report. A like interest had never been exhibited in the deliberations of the legislative corps. The crowds that flocked on the present occasion to the chambers exhibited a thousand different shades of politics, as France herself had exhibited during the last three months. Amongst the throng was the more educated portion of the emigrants, who had accepted the Charter through necessity, but whose intellectual tastes were based on a standard as ancient as the French nobility. There were also the friends of liberty—modern men—who accepted the Bourbons as the others did the Charter, through necessity. They were willing to receive liberty from the hands of the restored dynasty, and were resolved to be faithful if the others proved sincere. The malcontents, too, presented themselves—the revolutionists, the military men, and the partisans of the empire, affecting to be friends to liberty, and becoming really such without perceiving it. All were attracted by different motives: some by the interest they took in the affairs of government, others by the pleasure they took in seeing the ministers opposed. Many were influenced by zeal for the success of the question under discussion; all were actuated by curiosity, and it must be said, an enjoyment in the eloquent discussion of public affairs, a taste that began to be developed in France. When a people of lively temperament lay aside a long dominant taste, they almost immediately adopt another. If France had long indulged a passion for military glory, she had had, unfortunately, during a lengthened period, opportunities of satisfying the feeling. During eighteen successive years she had kept her eyes fixed on one man; and at a signal from this man she had seen blood flow in torrents with no

other final result than his own ruin! But the patriotism and the intellectual wants of the people now demanded different scenes. The spectacle of men distinguished by their moral character, intellectual power, and varied accomplishments, holding different opinions, and expressing these opinions boldly; rivals certainly, but not rivals so implacable as those generals who in Spain immolated whole armies to satisfy their personal jealousies; these men, ever occupied with the gravest interests of the nation, and often inspired by the vastness of these interests with the highest eloquence; these men, grouped around some leading minds, but never enslaved by any, and presenting in this way a thousand intellectual phases, animated, intense, and true as nature always is in a state of liberty—this intellectual and moral spectacle began to lay hold of and fix the attention of France. Even the military men were weary of pouring forth their blood, and were not amongst the least eager to witness these debates and take part in them. Great statesmen had not yet appeared; but they were looked for, hoped for, and their coming believed in; for the French were accustomed to see their country produce whatever she needed. She had produced generals in 1792, and the people felt certain that she would not fail to produce statesmen and orators in 1814. The report drawn up by M. Raynouard was a little diffuse, a little stiffly academical, and did not possess the nervous eloquence of business-like language, which practice alone can infuse into French oratory; but the report was listened to with religious attention. It certainly put forth every argument, direct or ancillary, that could support his views, and produced a great effect. That evening the report formed the general topic of conversation in Paris.

The discussion was adjourned to the 5th of August. On that day all the galleries were filled; so numerous was the attendance that even the hall and the seats reserved for the deputies were encroached on by the public. Remembering what had occurred during the Revolution, the members of the chambers had made a standing rule that no person but a deputy should enter the main body of the hall. This rule was appealed to by some deputies, who became alarmed at the spectacle presented by the chamber, and the president ordered all strangers to withdraw. In consequence of this incident the debate was adjourned to the following day, to the great vexation of the crowds that had thronged to witness a spectacle so novel and attractive.

The following day, the 6th, the debates commenced. Parliamentary eloquence, then in its infancy, could not dispense with written speeches, nor maintain a discussion by replying to unexpected observations with a prompt elocution inspired by

the circumstances of the moment. Each member appeared with his written speech, read it, and received the attention which he was expected to repay to his fellow-readers. But whatever be the mode of discussion adopted, every reason for and against a measure can be adduced, and by patient inquiry a subject will be ultimately placed in the clearest point of view.

The opponents of the law rejected, with a severity that prohibited their reappearance, the subtilties to which the words *repress* and *prevent* had given rise. They insisted that the liberty of the press was guaranteed by the 8th article of the Charter, that a censorship would annihilate this liberty, and that the establishment of such an institution was a strange proceeding within a month after the promulgation of the Charter. They asked what had occurred that a right, the spontaneous gift of royalty, should be so quickly annulled. After these observations, based on the spirit and text of the Charter, common sense, of which the orators of the liberal party were most frequently the exponents, was adduced to prove that within twenty-five years everything that could be said had been said; that every imaginable folly had been put into operation; that it would be impossible to conceive a folly that had not seen the light during that time either at the clubs or in the pages of the public journals; that if the public mind could have become a prey to madness, it would have been overtaken by that calamity, but it had remained rational and prudent, and the best proof of its sanity was its present recognition of all that was best in the monarchical and liberal opinions of 1789—in the almost universal adhesion to the Bourbons and the Charter. The opponents of the censorship maintained that it was better to trust to liberty than always to stand in awe of her; that besides, in past times, when the liberty of the press had an existence, that liberty had been used to check the excesses of democracy and despotism; that had the press been free, it would have resisted Robespierre and Napoleon; that even in England the press put a limit to the omnipotence of parliament, an omnipotence to which no other counterpoise could be found; and that in France, where the English form of government was about to be adopted, it would be prudent to raise up against ministers that powerful corrective, the only imaginable check that could be opposed to them.

All these arguments were founded on the opinion that the Revolution was finished, and that we were on the morrow, not the eve, of its convulsions. The partisans of government took part with the minority of the members of the committee, who dared not support the bill except with amendments, and who quoted, but with little effect, the ordinary arguments against the liberty of the press, against that capability, as they said, of continually

agitating the minds of the public, and urging them to all kinds of excess. They only produced a sensible effect by appealing to personal interests, and alleging in this regard arguments to which unfortunately the press has not yet replied under any régime in a steady and moderate tone.

"Who," said the government supporters, "will protect the public against the attacks of the press, if it be not previously submitted to the inspection of well-meaning men, of acknowledged prudence, who would be themselves responsible to a committee of the two chambers?" "And in order to live in peace, is it necessary that a man should be able to defend himself—with the pen or sword?" "Let us suppose," said a deputy, "let us suppose a pamphleteer endowed with Beaumarchais' abilities; should a man in order to escape his attacks be possessed of his rancorous talent? Let us suppose an assassin writer—and there are such—must a man be skilled in fencing in order to make himself respected? A public verdict is but a weak indemnification when the character of a man's wife or daughter is attacked, or when he is himself made the subject of accusation, the bare mention of which is an insult, and leaves in the mind recollections whose bitterness is never effaced!"

To these powerful arguments no other reply could be made than an appeal to that contempt for calumny which habit alone can give, a habit which at that time nobody had acquired, and which is only purchased at the price of bitter suffering; consequently, these arguments produced a certain effect, but were not sufficiently strong to efface a dominant popular idea, which was that the liberty of the press was guaranteed by the Charter, which made no mention of a censorship, and that consequently a temporary law only could be passed on the subject. The majority of the chamber being of a compliant disposition, did not wish to oppose the majority of the committee, who were certainly right, but at the same time they did not wish to give too severe a check to the crown in the first proposed act of legislation emanating from that source. They also appreciated to a certain degree the danger of suddenly unshackling the press at a period when the public mind was still ruled by passion. The majority of the chamber was evidently inclined to adopt the opinion of the minority of the committee—that is, to pass the proposed bill with amendments.

This was the opinion which all the partisans of government gave the ministers, who transmitted the intelligence to the king. And after all, two years' censorship was a great amelioration in the first moments of freedom, and represented a considerable space of time in our agitated century. It was, besides, a sort of conciliatory measure, that spared the govern-

ment the mortification of a defeat. The king, with a moderation that cannot be too highly praised—for in France, royalty has rarely shown so much good sense—consented to the amendments proposed by the minority of the committee, and thus admitted that the law should die a natural death in 1816, if the chambers did not renew it; that the line of demarcation between writings liable or not to the censorship should be fixed at twenty instead of thirty sheets; lastly, that the opinions of the members of the chambers should be exempt from all preliminary examination.

M. de Montesquiou, at the termination of a discussion that had lasted five days, rose and announced the adhesion of the king to the amendments proposed by the minority of the committee, and then in a speech flowing in style, moderate in sentiment, delivered with ease, and apparently extempore, he eluded the principal difficulty—that of determining whether the censorship was or was not embodied in the Charter—and claimed the benefit of the doubt for the crown; asserted that the government wished for liberty, but prayed for prudence in the manner of dispensing it; and concluded his speech by adducing very plausible reasons for a temporary censorship. The minister of the interior obtained on this occasion a signal triumph for himself and for the government. The amended bill having become that of the ministers, passed by a majority of 57 votes in a house of 217 members.

This result satisfied every reasonable man. The liberty of the press was acknowledged as a principle; its suspension was temporary, and necessitated by circumstances. An independent majority had stood forth, that did not seek to curtail the prerogatives of the crown, but would not allow the liberty of the subject to be sacrificed. The power of the king had been checked without being humiliated; the chiefs of parties had waived their personal feelings in favour of the general interest, and began to feel an inclination to refer their differences to an equitable, firm, and independent tribunal, which was to be found in the chambers, and which, untouched by the rancour of party spirit, and entertaining no extreme opinion, would serve as a moderating power to the violence of all parties, and tend to arrange their differences by negotiations, not by battles.

The vote given on this occasion, followed by several others dictated by the same spirit, infused into the public mind a certain tranquillity, which unfortunately was not destined to be of long duration. The committee appointed to inquire into the police decree concerning the celebration of Sundays and holidays made a report in which all the reasons for and against the question under consideration were set forth with great

impartiality. The report condemned the imprudent use which some persons sought to make of that article of the Charter that declared the Catholic religion to be the religion of the State, and denied that this article gave authority to submit all forms of worship to the practice of one. At the same time, the necessity of one day of rest in the week was acknowledged, which it was only natural should be the same as that observed by the religion of the majority of the citizens. But the report added, that great precaution was needed in giving either to religious or social customs an obligatory character; and the report further declared that the law, the law alone, and that a new law embodying the spirit of the times, ought to decide so delicate a question.

Two advocates of considerable reputation, MM. Dard and Falconnet, ardently devoted to the cause of emigration, had written against the validity of the sales called *national*. These writings, which breathed extreme violence, contained some subtle reasoning. It was asserted that the king had not the power to declare sales irrevocable that had not been regularly effected, and that scarcely one of those in question was so; that in any case, there were things which the king could not promise, because impossible even for him. For example, the king could not forcibly take away the property of any of his subjects; whence it followed, that the article of the Charter relating to national sales was void, because not founded in justice. Both these pamphlets revealed the real and crafty policy of the emigration, which was a desire to induce individual negotiations between the ancient and new proprietors, and oblige the latter through fear to restore to the former at the lowest price property that the State had alienated. These pamphlets, received with transport by the emigrants, with uneasiness by the mass of the public, and with indignation by the persons immediately interested, were denounced to the chambers in numerous petitions. The Chamber of Deputies, the first called on for an opinion, declared null and void every attempt to injure the irrevocability of the sales called "national;" and the members of the chamber showed, by a unanimous resolution, that they were determined to enforce the observance of the articles of the Charter in question. However, an appeal was made to the ministers on this grave question, and the chief of police caused MM. Dard and Falconnet to be arrested as disturbers of the public peace, and as having caused dissension between various classes of the citizens. It must be admitted that this demonstration produced no result; but for the moment it exculpated the government, and was of a nature to tranquillise those whose interests were immediately involved. The financial business was next

laid before the Chamber of Deputies, and afforded the members a fresh opportunity of displaying their firmness, justice, and intelligence.

The royal council had been long urging M. Louis to bring forward his budget, and explain the means by which he hoped to defray the expenses of the State. The intrepid minister, who had the honour of being the creator of public credit in France, read his budget, and explained his system of finance, as soon as his colleagues furnished him with a list of their wants. Assisted at first by M. de Montesquiou—who, being the intermediary between the king and the chambers, was fully aware of their susceptibility in financial affairs—M. Louis persevered in restricting the expenses of the war department to 200 million, and the expenses of the navy to 51 million francs. M. Louis on this point alone erred; for he would have done better to brave the greatest parliamentary opposition than limit himself to an amount that was evidently insufficient, as by such a proceeding he compromised at the same time the authority of the government and the popularity of the Bourbons with the army. It is true that the budget of 1815 was alone in question, whilst that of 1814—that is, of the current year—remained open to any unforeseen necessity. Be this as it may, the minister of finance—who never lost sight of his main object, the establishment of public credit—remained inflexible, and persevered in fixing the expenditure of the two great departments at the sums he had named, and which were not to be exceeded. The sums allowed for diplomatic expenditure were also diminished. The minister of the interior was only allowed what was absolutely necessary for the support of the public roads; 33 million francs were allowed for the expenses of the civil list, which was an extravagant expenditure considering the value of money at that time; but this expense was created, though not acknowledged, by the cost of the king's military household, and by the benevolence of the Bourbon princes towards their former companions in misfortune. The total amount of the budget of 1815 was fixed at 618 million francs, exclusive of the expense of collecting the taxes. In these 618 millions were comprised 70 millions for arrears; that is to say, for the unpaid public expenses of 1813 and 1814, such as the pay, provisions, and clothing of the troops, which could not be liquidated by means of credit, and for whose discharge ready money was absolutely needed.

The most important project devised by the minister of finance was that which related to the general discharge of the debts of the State, whatever their origin. M. Louis had, with rare firmness of principle, enforced his opinion concerning the collection

of the taxes and the entire discharge of all the anterior debts of the State, whether incurred by *Bonaparte or not*, to use an expression then common. M. Louis had frequently, by his excitement under contradiction, provoked a smile from the king, but had uniformly won his approbation. "It is not here a question," said the minister, "of abstract theories, about which political economists argue without result. Here consequences follow immediately on your resolves. I cannot provide for all the expenses of the State without having recourse to credit, for I only live and you only live on the credit that I have succeeded in creating, the revenue being far from adequate to the daily expenses. Now, I can sustain this provisional credit, and convert it into definite credit only by two means—the rigorous collection of the taxes, and the entire discharge of the debts of the State. Without this twofold condition, I shall be obliged to close the public coffers, and allow the State functionaries, the clergy, magistracy, and even the army, to die of hunger at the gates of the treasury."

In reply to this energetic declaration of principles, the Count d'Artois and the Duke d'Angoulême, who were always embarrassed by the promises they had made to the people on their return to France, endeavoured to fall back on the question of the *droits réunis*. But they were opposed, in the first place, by M. Louis, the vehemence of whose language touched those limits which respect for the royal presence would not allow him to overstep; they were opposed by the king, who cared little about the promises made by his brother and nephews; they were even opposed by the Duke de Berry, who had constituted himself champion of the army, and who, finding himself always met by the cry of financial distress when he advocated the interests of the army, would not on any account consent to a diminution of the resources of the treasury. This prince declared very plainly that those royalists of the south who wished the abolition of the *droits réunis* ought to be answered with a discharge of artillery. The tobacco monopoly, which began to yield considerable profits, gave offence in certain provinces, where it was described as a *revolutionary work*. Baron Louis, however, persevered in maintaining this monopoly, and succeeded by his usual arguments. As to the direct taxes, he simply proposed to legalise the decrees by which Napoleon had in the preceding January increased them by the addition of some centimes. These centimes having been originally laid on to defray the expenses of the war, it was only natural they should exist as one of the consequences of the war even after the conclusion of peace. The *droits réunis* would fall heaviest on the cities; the superadded centimes would be felt most in the country districts. It was a general lesson, teaching all that

great faults ought to be avoided, but that once committed or permitted, their inevitable consequences must be borne.

As to the question of the entire discharge of the State debts, no matter what their origin, there were no advocates of a national bankruptcy found in the royal council. The necessity of establishing public credit was too fully recognised by all the members to admit of a single doubt. But these debts being acknowledged, the important point was to find the means of paying them. M. Louis had drawn up the balance-sheet of his predecessors, MM. de Gaëte and Mollien, whose portfolios he had received—those of the finance and treasury—in the way that the balance-sheet of a defunct government is generally drawn up—that is to say, with very little justice, not as to the actual figures, but as to their moral worth.

He had estimated the deficit at 1308 million francs, admitting that of this sum only 818 millions could be considered as immediately demandable. This acknowledgment alone was sufficient to prove the exaggeration, certainly unworthy of him, with which M. Louis represented the burden transmitted by his predecessors. He had, in fact, added 244 millions to the arrears, a sum which during the past ten years the *domaine extraordinaire* had justly contributed to the treasury; for the *domaine extraordinaire* owing its origin to the benefits derived from the war, it was only natural it should bear the loss consequent thereon. Moreover, the *domaine extraordinaire* belonging to the State, it was the State that was indebted to the State, and there was no reason for comprising this sum in the total of the debt for which immediate payment could be demanded. Another sum of 246 millions had been also unjustly placed under the same head. These were monies deposited as security for the fulfilment of certain services to the State, and which during many years had been considered as part of the funded debt, for the depositors of such security had, when entitled to withdraw these monies, been always succeeded by others who invested equivalent sums. Consequently, the State was never obliged to reimburse this money, which bore an interest much below the ordinary rate. It was therefore only the securities of depositors abiding in countries now severed from French rule that could be justly comprised in the demandable arrears, and these amounted to a very small sum.

The demandable arrears could therefore be reduced to 818 million francs, from which was to be deducted a sum of 12 millions in ready money found in the treasury, and 70 millions added to the budgets of 1814 and 1815, because this sum formed portion of the arrears that were to be paid in ready money. There remained 736 million francs, whose payment could be instantly demanded; and a close inquiry will show

that from this sum many items may be deducted which were unjustly comprised therein. It may be a matter of doubt whether a sum of about 700 million francs could be considered a burden that the preceding government had neglected to discharge, when we reflect that this administration had not increased the taxes until reduced to the last extremity, and then only by the addition of some centimes, of which very little had been collected at the time of Napoleon's deposition; it rather becomes a matter of astonishment that two wars like those of 1813 and 1814 left only a deficit of 700 millions. Whilst deploring the policy that brought allied Europe to Paris, we cannot help admiring the administrative genius that was able to confine within such limits the expenses of a fearful struggle; and we must acknowledge that the most rigorous order had been maintained in our finances amid the horrors of war.

But M. Louis, though a great financier, was a partisan, and would not acknowledge these truths; for he thought more of his own fame than of the reputation of his predecessors. Be this as it may, it was necessary to provide for a deficit of about 700 millions; but as the claims on this sum would be made successively within two or three years, the entire might be cleared off within that time at the rate of 250 millions per annum.

There were two means of providing for this deficit. It could be met either by means of interminable annuities, or by bills of short date, such as exchequer bills, of which the minister had already issued some millions, and with good effect. But in having recourse to interminable annuities, a serious question arose. Should the interest given to the public creditor be fixed *au pair*, or fluctuate with the current price of the day? If fixed *au pair*, the creditor lost 35 per cent.; for at the actual date the five per cents. were down to 65 francs. To fix the interest at the current price of the day would be exposing the State to pay more than the real debt; because there were good grounds to hope that the funds would rise with the return of peace and the renewal of credit. The State would have been, besides, bound to pay a continuous interest of 8 per cent., without reckoning the inconvenience of throwing into the market a quantity of stock much greater than the demands of the market would meet. There was a much better means of providing for the emergency, which was to issue bills payable in three years, at an interest proportionate to the circumstances of the capitalists, amounting to about 8 per cent. These bills, favoured by peace and the confidence felt in the minister, were likely to keep pretty near par, and three years allowed leisure to provide for their payment. M. Louis wished to

alienate gradually 300,000 hectares of wood: the State still possessed about 1,400,000. He also reckoned on the receipt of certain sums arising from the sale of the *biens communaux*. By steadily applying these various resources, as they fell in, to the liquidation of the lately issued bills, there was a certainty of keeping up their value at about par, and in three years the credit of the State would be re-established, when it would be possible to issue bills at an advantageous rate, and discharge on easy terms the unpaid portion of the arrears. The finance minister departed, on this occasion, from the principle he had had the honour of being the first to lay down clearly, and whose truth he had verified by experience, which is, that when the rate of money is very high, it is better to borrow on bills of short date than on interminable annuities, because by this means the State is subjected only for a short time to the increased rate of interest.

M. Louis therefore issued temporary bills, called *reconnaissances de liquidation*, bearing an interest of 8 per cent., and payable in three years. These were to be issued as the others were paid off, and the acceptors were to have as security the 300,000 hectares of wood, in addition to the price of the *biens communaux*. M. Louis did not entirely reject the resource of the interminable annuities, and he proposed to grant some to those State creditors who would accept them at par, an offer that would certainly be accepted, when, consequent on the revival of public credit, the stocks would rise. This project was sufficient evidence that the minister who conceived it was endowed with extraordinary perception and unerring forecast. M. Louis had already induced the public to accept some exchequer bills at 8 per cent.; but when, in presenting his financial project, the intention to pay the State creditors to the last farthing would be announced, and that as a guarantee of these payments 300,000 hectares of wood would be disposed of, which might be easily effected in three years, public confidence would revive, and the minister would be able to await the time when a government loan might be effected on favourable terms. This was a most able manner of reviving public credit, for had a quicker process been attempted, public credit would have been injured by a breach of faith, which would have been the inevitable consequence of an attempt to force the State creditors to accept stock at par; and this credit would have been burdensome to the State were the stock made to bear the current interest of the day; and in either case, the simultaneous issue of a considerable quantity of government bills would have damped public confidence. There was another and purely political consideration, which the minister abstained from pressing on the consideration of the king and princes, which

was, that the alienation of the 300,000 hectares of wood, which had been the property of the ancient clergy, was a measure calculated to inspire the holders of national property with confidence, and to terminate, or at least diminish, one of those sources of uneasiness that most disturbed the Bourbon government. Considered in every point of view, M. Louis' plan was admirably well conceived.

The project was communicated to M. de Talleyrand, who had very just notions in financial matters, and to M. de Montesquiou, who, though he did not understand the subject, had sufficient good sense to appreciate the wisdom of M. Louis' views; it was then laid before the royal council. The king, who was absolutely ignorant of financial affairs, seeing that the project was universally approved, and being, moreover, resolved to defer to his ministers in things that they understood better than he, gave his consent. M. de Blacas alone raised some objections. He, though a well-meaning man, was one of those who saw in the arrears the concentration of the debts incurred during the Revolution and the empire, and who, on this account, was not very anxious for their liquidation. Indeed, he would have been very glad to pay "Bonaparte's creditors" with something else than money. Stock at par seemed to him sufficient payment for such creditors, and he made a proposal to that effect. M. Louis became warm, and replied, very justly, that to become bankrupt for the entire or part of a debt was still a bankruptcy; that by such a proceeding the government took a place amongst those who paid their creditors 50 per cent., instead of not giving anything; that for his part, he did not wish to be classed with either; and if the government acted in that manner, the funds would instantly fall, for two reasons —the breach of faith, and the too great number of bills issued; and that instead of public credit being re-established, it would by such a measure be irrevocably destroyed. M. de Blacas replied, that the reduction in the funds, which the minister wished to prevent, would fall on the lately issued bills, which would be only changing the nature of the evil. But this mode of reasoning had no effect. It only proved that M. de Blacas, who was no financier, had not fully comprehended M. Louis' project, and did not perceive the dependence of each part on the other. M. Louis' plan was adopted and laid before the Chamber of Deputies, supported by a sound statement of the motives that actuated its originator; but the statement did not render justice to the proposed measure, for this able minister was more capable of conceiving than giving expression to his ideas, though on some occasions, when excited, he became eloquent, and expressed himself in terms at once energetic and picturesque.

M. Louis' project was referred to the bureaux of the chamber, and from the bureaux to a select committee. The measure was expected with impatience, and produced a great effect. The real extent of the burdens of the State was now for the first time fully laid bare, and though considerable in the actual state of things, it was not more than France could bear. There was now shown the possibility of making the expenses of the budget tally with the resources of the State, and there was exhibited on the part of the government a frank and sincere desire to pay the public debts, for which sufficient resources existed. And the public now saw a minister, energetic, able, and thoroughly competent to the task he had undertaken; a task from whose responsibilities he did not shrink, and which he felt convinced he could discharge.

The day M. Louis' project was laid before the royal council the funds stood at 65; within a few days they rose to 70, and soon after to 75. It was evident that the minister of finance understood perfectly well the temper of the money market, and how to inspire confidence there; and it can be confidently asserted that underhand methods of influencing the funds, though often employed, had no share in their rapid rise on this occasion.

The committee examined M. Louis' project in all its bearings, without any feeling of complacency towards the government, and with the desire natural to committees that represent public assemblies, to make improvements in measures proposed for their consideration. But after an attentive examination both of the budget of 1815 and of the means proposed for liquidation of the arrears, the committee acknowledged that the proposed measure was the most certain and least expensive method of extricating the treasury from its embarrassments. With the exception of one or two amendments in the mode of drawing up the statement, the minister's budget and his financial plan were integrally adopted.

The report was laid before the chamber, and discussed in the latter days of August. The public could not be expected to testify the same interest in this as in the law concerning the press; for the subject was less likely to excite the passions or call forth a brilliant display of eloquence. Besides, the matter was rather abstract; but the subject was deeply interesting to commercial men and to politicians, who fully appreciated the importance of the subject. The galleries of the Chamber of Deputies were less thronged with partisans; but there was a large number of serious-minded men amongst the auditory. M. de Montesquiou accompanied M. Louis to all the sittings where the question of finance was discussed, in order to afford him the aid of his personal influence, and if needs were, that

of his eloquence. The discussion lasted twelve days, and was very animated, ably supported on both sides, though exhibiting the inexperience of men who were for the first time called on to discuss serious interests in a really free assembly. The members commenced by a demonstration of zeal for royalty, and passed the civil list, which amounted to 25 millions for the king, and 8 for the princes. Afterwards, in a spontaneous outburst of feeling, they offered to pay the debts contracted by the royal family during the emigration, and granted 30 millions to defray an expense that was purely accidental. After this manifestation of loyalty, the members proceeded to business, and began to examine the budget in all its details.

The budget of 1815 was first taken into consideration, for that of 1814 was liable to all the chances of a laborious liquidation, whose result would yet remain unknown for some months. Besides, the arrears, being burdened with the expenditure of 1814, could alone be affected by it, and 50 millions more or less, in the 600 or 700 that were to be raised by credit, were not worth mentioning under the head of resources. The chamber consequently turned its entire attention to the budget of 1815, which represented the future, and about which alone any measures could be taken. According to the habit of public assemblies little accustomed to State affairs, the members exclaimed against the enormity of the expense. There were some deputies who, like M. de Flaugergues, a man of talent, and a sincere and upright constitutionalist, complained that this budget of 618 millions was nearly as great as that of the empire in time of peace, though in the time of the empire France reckoned 130 departments. The complaint was groundless, for with the exception of military expenses, a few departments more or less could not make any sensible difference in the expenses of a great State. Had the members of the chamber been thoroughly versed in public business—a knowledge that can only be acquired in a free country—they would have criticised M. Louis' budget in a very different spirit; for the real error of the budget was the insufficiency of the sums allowed for some of the principal departments of the State. For example, the ministers of the war and the marine departments, whose expenditure had been so curtailed by the finance minister, had in the end persuaded themselves that they could defray their current expenses, the one with 51, the other with 200 millions, which was a complete illusion, attributable not to a wish to deceive, but to their inexperience. Expenses to the amount of at least 100 millions had been unintentionally dissembled in this budget. But that was of little importance at the time. The great point was to re-establish public credit

by an open discussion of the state of the finances, and by a statement not wholly disheartening of the resources of the State. Succeeding years would bring forth calculations more correct, and more conformable with the real state of things. The budget was consequently criticised in a sense inverse to the truth; but the objections produced no effect, because they did not touch the essential question, one that would awaken the passions—that is to say, they were not brought to bear upon the proposed plan of raising credit. A few words were said about the State revenue. Some deputies who represented the wine-growing departments remonstrated, but without being supported, against the indirect taxes. The chamber, though constituted several years before the restoration, was essentially imbued, as we shall see presently, with the spirit of landed proprietorship, and was more concerned about the direct than the indirect taxes. The chamber silenced by not giving attention to the deputies from the south; and appeared to attach importance only to the additional centimes that had been levied by a simple decree within the last three months of the empire, and converted into a law in the budget of M. Louis. The sum total of these centimes, whether for the expenses of the departments or for general expenses, amounted to sixty. The chamber seemed inclined to reduce them, but deferred a final determination until the day when the amendments should be debated.

A general feeling of impatience at length brought on the question of the arrears, and the means proposed to defray them. M. Louis' plan was opposed by two classes of adversaries: the deputies, who were certainly few in number, that participated in the sentiments of the emigration, and who wished to pay the State creditors with paper, and not with timber belonging to the clergy; and there were the ultra-liberals, such as M. Durbach, who, with good intentions, but without discernment, looked upon the proposed means of raising credit as a system of stock-jobbing, not perceiving that nothing could be more opposed to stock-jobbing than paying one's debts punctually. Both parties uttered with much pomposity a vast number of puerilities.

Those who were well disposed towards the emigration dared not propose a national bankruptcy. It must be said, for the honour of those times, that ideas of financial honesty had already made so much progress that no one would have ventured to deny the principle of the total liquidation of the State debts, whatsoever their origin. We must even add, for the honour of the members of the legislative corps, that they would not have suffered it. But indirect ways were adopted: it was asserted that it would be sufficient to pay the State creditors

with stock at par; that it would be placing them in the same position as all the holders of government stock, and that they would have no right to complain. The supporters of this view insinuated, besides, that amongst the State creditors there was a number of government contractors who had largely defrauded the treasury, and that paying them in the proposed manner, there could be no doubt but that they would receive more than their due. The alienation of three hundred thousand hectares of wood was next condemned. The speakers repeated those arguments so often adduced against the destruction of timber, but they carefully abstained from alluding to the point which weighed most with them, which was that the wood in question had been the property of the clergy. They said that the proposers of this measure were about to injure forest property by putting up for sale such a quantity of timber, and considerably diminish the quantity of timber belonging to the State, for the State possessed in all 1,400,000 hectares of forest; that of these, 400,000 would return to the former proprietors, should their unsold property be restored to the emigrants; that consequently, there would not remain at the utmost more than a million; that if of these, 300,000 were sold, there would only remain 700,000; that the forest property of the State would be thus reduced to half, which would entail a serious injury on the country, as it was only the woods belonging to the State whose preservation was secured. All this was said in an irritated tone, and with a great want of candour. But the legislative corps saw very clearly the motives that inspired these speakers.

As to the ultra-liberals, they exclaimed against the creation of a fresh paper currency, and above all, against an interest of 8 per cent., which, in their opinion, was excessive. They forgot that the minister had already created this paper money, that a large quantity had been already issued under the title of exchequer bills; that he had succeeded in getting them accepted, thanks to his recognised principles, and thanks to an interest of 7 per cent.; that an interest of 7 per cent. on bills of three or six months supposed at least 8 per cent. for bills payable in three years; that it was fortunate that such a plan had been devised and had succeeded, for the taxes had not brought 200 millions to the treasury, and 350 millions had been paid away, thanks to the plan devised by the minister. Not being aware of these facts, or neglecting to inquire into them, not having a desire to learn them, nor possessing sufficient talent to seek them, the provincial deputies said what provincial deputies often say, that the government was seeking to increase the facilities for stock-jobbing, and sacrificing the property of the people to Paris speculators.

One opponent alone proposed something less futile, which

was to give the State creditors bills at 5 per cent., redeemable at 3 per cent., which would render the liquidation more prompt, and keep these bills at a much higher value than the stock, which was only redeemable at 1 per cent. But this proposal, apparently favourable to the treasury, as it seemed to show that at an equal expense the public debt could be much sooner liquidated, was, in reality, only an attempt to frustrate the financial plan of the minister. In fact, by making part of the interest redeemable, it was reduced to 5 per cent., consequently lower than the commercial rate, which was 7 per cent. for bills of three and six months, as was shown in the case of the exchequer bills. It was therefore only a puerile effort to evade the common commercial law, which is to pay for things at their actual value. As to the rest, the project in question, though subtle in itself, and supported by arguments still more subtle, was not favourably received nor warmly supported.

The project of M. Louis was supported by the committee and many well-informed deputies, who adduced excellent reasons for their opinions, but all these arguments were in writing, for the most part without order or connection, but they produced an effect, for sound reasoning will ultimately prevail, whatever be the form in which it is put forth. The best defender of the ministerial plan was the minister himself, who, in a written and sound discourse, discussed all the parts of his system in a manner comprehensible to the humblest intelligence. But when details came to be examined, the discussion became warmer, and consequently more serious and more effective, and the written speeches being laid aside, the minister produced a still greater impression on the chamber. M. Louis was not endowed with the gift of eloquence, and besides, he spoke with a kind of stammer, the effect of his extreme vivacity; but there was an energy in his language consequent on intense thought, and which produced a powerful effect on his hearers. He began by saying that he had never neglected any means of reducing the public expenses, and that he had carried economy to its extreme limits. As to the taxes, he treated with contempt those orators who affected to pity the tax-payers, and said that the first of all duties was to provide for the wants of the State, which represented the most imperious wants of every individual; for people could no more do without soldiers, judges, and roads than without bread; that the direct and indirect taxes were indispensable; that they should be submitted to; and that besides, of all the countries of Europe, France was one of the least burdened by taxation; that, in short, France should pay the price of her errors, which was the most certain way to get rid of them. Passing afterwards to the question of the arrears and the proposed plan for

raising credit, the minister maintained that, as a principle, the State ought to pay the public debts, and pay them fully; that such was, in the first place, the duty of honest men, and in the next place, the policy of wise men; that instead of becoming poor, the people became rich by acting in this manner; for public credit would be thus re-established, and with public, private credit, and with private credit the vitality of commerce; that, in fact, there was not a member of the government who thought otherwise; that the king subscribed to the principle of paying the arrears, no matter what their amount, nor by whom contracted. The minister expressed these opinions with the energy of profound conviction; and added, that not being able to pay the State debts by means of the taxes, and not wishing to increase them, as they were already thought too heavy, no other way remained to him but credit; that he was sure of succeeding by this means, as he had found by recent experience, but that his success depended on two conditions—first, that the government should establish a claim to credit by the punctual discharge of existing engagements, and by paying according to the actual rate of the money market; that if the government pretended to pay the State creditors by giving them stock at par, they would defraud the creditors of 25, 30, and 40 per cent.; that if, on the contrary, the interest was to be rated at the current price of the day, the State would be exposed to pay more than the actual debts, and would be, moreover, bound to an interminable interest of 8 per cent.; and that, lastly, the money market would be inundated by the quantity of bills issued; that for all these reasons bills at short date were preferable, which would certainly bear an interest of 8 and even 9 per cent.; but the burden would be only temporary, and would neither defraud the State nor the creditors, as by this means nothing more than the capital really due would be paid; that these bills were not a chimera, but a reality, for those already issued at three and six months' date continued to bear an interest of 7 and $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., which was equivalent to about 8 per cent. on securities payable in two or three years; that the woods in question were much more a guarantee than an actual alienation of forest property; that if a portion of this wood were sold, to the amount of a hundred million francs, for example, and that with this money the bills issued should be redeemed, public credit would become so stable that the government might then obtain a loan, with which the unpaid portion of the arrears could be paid off; and of the woods whose alienation was proposed, it was not probable that more than a third would be sold. Besides, as for what concerned forest property, the government proposed to sell only those woods of small extent, which could be better managed by private individuals

than by the State; but the woods containing timber suited for shipbuilding, or important from public considerations, should remain intact; and the fears conceived or expressed on this subject were perfectly chimerical; that the financial project devised for the accomplishment of all these objects formed a whole whose parts were intimately dependent on each other, and to withdraw one involved the destruction of the entire. And the minister finally declared that he knew no better means to adopt, nor did he wish to try any other, being certain, after five months' experience, of the efficacy of the means proposed.

M. Louis repeated these reasons several times in the course of the discussion, as circumstances called them forth, and with an emotion of voice and features that testified to the sincerity of his conviction. The members of the chamber were persuaded. Seeing that they had to do with a man of talent, who understood perfectly well what he was about, they closed the debate, notwithstanding the cries of a many-shaded opposition. The examination of the details was then commenced, and adjourned to the next sitting.

After having ascertained the real feelings of the chamber, the two ministers recognised the necessity of making a concession, not upon the budget nor the financial plan, but in the matter of the additional centimes. The spirit of landed proprietorship that prevailed in the chamber demanded a sacrifice in favour of the direct taxes. The additional centimes were consequently reduced from 60 to 30, but no alteration was made in the sum total of the budget, which remained fixed at 618 million francs—a proceeding that implied a pledge on the part of the chamber to make up this total the following year by some means or other. The thing being agreed on, the amendment was proposed at the final sitting, and accepted by M. de Montesquiou. The minister of finance left the chamber at this moment, not wishing to be responsible for a concession that was repugnant to the inflexibility of his principles; for he argued that the chamber having voted the expenses, ought at the same time to have voted the resources that were to meet these expenses. The amendment was put to the vote, and carried.

The last point of difference remained to be decided. The opposition had rallied all their forces for the discussion of an amendment that proposed to reduce the interest on the lately issued exchequer bills from 8 to 6 per cent. The amendment presented serious dangers. In the first place, medium measures suit public assemblies, that for the most part seek truth in a middle course. Besides, many honest men, but profoundly ignorant of financial affairs, believed that by this diminution of the interest they were protecting the public money; and there were many malicious opponents who saw in the proposed

amendment the ruin of the minister's project, a prospect highly gratifying to the ultra-royalists, who did not wish to pay "Bonaparte's creditors;" and it was equally pleasing to the enemies of the Bourbons, as it would be a severe check to the restored dynasty. M. Louis made a vigorous opposition. He said that in proposing 8 per cent., he had not made an arbitrary but a necessary proposition; that money had a commercial value independent of the will of governments; that he had already obtained money at 7 and 7½ per cent. on bills of short date; that possibly he would be obliged to pay 8 per cent. on bills of a longer date; that if possible, he would make a better bargain, but it was indispensable that he should enjoy a discretionary power on this point, a refusal of which would be equivalent to a rejection of the entire financial project, and even of the budget, in which case he would leave to the authors of the amendment the task of meeting the difficulties of the position.

A courageous sincerity in a ministry visibly attached to the public welfare never remains without response in a general assembly. The amendment, however popular, was only supported by 101 voices, and rejected by 122, which gave, it is true, only a majority of 21 for the government; but this majority did not represent the chamber, for when the total of the ministerial proposition was put to the vote, 140 members voted for, and only 66 against it—giving a majority of 74, which was enormous considering the number of voters.

This triumph produced a great effect on the public, who saw, on the one side, a powerful and rational majority decided to support the government; and on the other side, this government, steady, prudent, skilled in financial affairs, knowing what was desirable, and desiring it ardently. The following day the 5 per cents., which had risen from 65 to 75 francs on the presentation of the financial project, rose when it passed the chamber to 78; and should the peace continue, it was not chimerical to believe that the funds would rise to 90, an extraordinary figure at that period. Under these circumstances it would be easy for the government to effect a loan, and immediately pay off the entire of the arrears, alienating only part of the woods ordered to be sold.

But questions of finance were not the sole difficulties on which M. Louis was called to decide. The termination of the continental blockade, which occurred at the same time as the fall of the empire, necessitated an immediate consideration of the state of commerce and manufactures. Napoleon had not persevered sufficiently long in the continental blockade to conquer England by commercial means; but he persevered long enough to lay the foundations of our manufactures, and it

naturally followed that when our country was invaded, and the barriers that opposed the influx of foreign manufactures fell, our commercial market should be powerfully disturbed, and add to the military, to the civil functionaries, and holders of national property, a new class of malcontents, disposed to regret the empire.

We have already seen that immediately after the return of the Bourbons, M. Louis had taken some provisional measures to accommodate our commercial legislation to the new state of things. For example, he had reduced the duty on raw cotton to a mere *droit de balance*, in order to enable our manufacturers to work cheaper. He reduced the duties on sugars and coffee to a rate that enabled the French to compete with the British commerce. But these measures were only temporary, and many others were needed to secure the existence and development of our manufactures. But as always happens in such cases, each class demanded a prohibitory duty for its own advantage, refusing at the same time a merely protective one to others; and the chambers, as the arbitrating power, were beset with pressing petitions from all our manufacturers. The minister had endeavoured to satisfy the greater number of these demands by the introduction of moderate measures calculated to obtain the consent of the chambers.

In the first place, he had re-established custom-houses along our frontiers, and had at the same time stopped a species of fraud resulting from the exceptional circumstances of the time. The districts added to our territorial possessions of 1790 by the treaty of Paris, though not of great extent, held at that time considerable quantities of merchandise. These additions, lying in the direction of Belgium, the Rhine, and Savoy, were filled with English manufactured goods, which became French property, as a matter of right, the day we took definite possession of the new territories. With regard to these goods, the minister ordered the re-exportation of those that were prohibited, and demanded duty for those whose entrance was authorised by the tariff. He prohibited goods made of thread or cotton. With respect to woollen cloths, it was only necessary to enforce the existing laws. Our cotton spinners and weavers, being at length able to obtain the raw material, not at the price that prevailed during the continental blockade, but at the rate current through Europe, were that year able to compete at the Leipsic fair with English manufactured goods. In fact, ours were found to be of a better quality. Our manufacturers had certainly sustained a considerable loss immediately after the abolition of the duty on raw cotton; for they were obliged to sell their goods at the rate to which the suppression of this duty had reduced them. The loss thus sustained was stated at

30 million francs, and the manufacturers did not hesitate to demand the reimbursement of this sum from the chambers, as the consequence of a tax unduly collected. M. Louis angrily rejected the claim, and the chamber agreed in his opinion. The deputies looked on the loss thus sustained by the manufacturers as one of the inevitable evils of war, and which a government can no more avert from a certain branch of manufacture injured by an alteration in the frontiers than they could from a province occupied by an enemy.

Next to cotton, the most important of our modern manufactures was of iron. This metal, made to replace stone and wood in a thousand uses, was destined to become one of the most active instruments of modern civilisation. The manufacture of this metal had been greatly developed in France, in consequence of the continental blockade, which prohibited the entrance of foreign iron brought by sea. The abolition of this interdict exposed our metallurgic manufactures to a formidable rivalry. A great revolution had been accomplished in England in this branch of trade by the substitution of sea coal for wood as a combustible, and by the use of the rolling-mill instead of the hammer in working the metal. The consequence was that the English were able to sell iron at 350 francs the ton, which the French could not do at less than 500. It is true that the French iron, smelted by the action of wood, and worked by the hammer, possessed incontestable advantages as to quality, but could not support the impending rivalry. Consequently, our metallurgic manufacturers were amongst the most restless and anxious. The great iron manufacturers declared, and with reason, that if they were not protected against foreign iron, they would be obliged to stop their works, which would deprive France of an article of the first necessity, and render her dependent on the English, who would soon make her pay a higher price than the French themselves. These were supported by the great timber proprietors, who could find no market for their goods if the manufacturers of iron ceased to purchase. These petitioners were opposed by the inhabitants of the seaports and the wine-growing provinces, who hoped to export their wines to those northern countries that might send iron to France. Not daring to avow their true motives, they asserted that France, deprived of Belgium and the Rhenish provinces, would not be able to furnish a quantity of iron sufficient for her wants, an assertion that experience has belied. The iron manufacturers demanded a prohibitory duty, whilst, on the contrary, the merchants and proprietors of vineyards clamoured for free trade. The minister proposed to put a duty of 150 francs per ton on foreign iron, which, added to 350—the English market price—would bring it

up to the rate of 500 francs. He thought this protective duty would be sufficient. There was a lively discussion in the chambers, where both the opposing parties found warm defenders. An amendment proposing a duty of 250 francs was presented and largely supported, but the duty of 150 francs was carried, and in this affair also the wishes of the government prevailed in the chambers.

After the iron manufacturers came the sugar-refiners, who addressed strong remonstrances both to the government and the chambers. Sugar-refining was an ancient branch of French manufacture, and one of the most extensive and productive, especially when France, possessing St. Domingo, drew thence large quantities of raw sugar, which, being refined, found a sale in all the markets of Europe. War, which had favoured our national manufactures, had also served some rival productions, amongst which was the refining of sugar in other countries. The French refiners remonstrated. They appealed to the mighty memories of our colonial prosperity; they were listened to, and a prohibitory duty was passed.

The agriculturists also put in their claims, and found amongst the members of the legislative corps many inclined to hear them favourably. Our agriculturists wished to profit of the opening of the seas to export their grain and wool. Grain of all kinds had been retained in France during the late times of scarcity; and as to wool, Napoleon had prohibited not alone its exportation, but that of sheep, because he wished that the great importation of merino sheep should tend exclusively to the improvement of French woollen goods. The agriculturists consequently demanded free trade in corn, wool, and sheep; but they were opposed by the inhabitants of the sea-coast—that is, by the people of Normandy, Brittany, and Vendée—who were violent royalists. They were also opposed by all those who worked in wool; in the first place, the manufacturers of woollen cloth; and next, the manufacturers of those various tissues known as "merinos," which have become a real blessing for the people by their extensive use and low price. But the agriculturists had sound arguments on their side; for if for the protection of national manufactures it is natural to prohibit the importation of foreign produce, it does not appear so reasonable to prohibit the exportation of home produce. The agriculturists appeared to be right. Their arguments were popular, and the Chamber of Deputies, adopting the views of the finance minister, sanctioned the exportation of grain, subject to a fluctuating duty that varied with the price of the commodity. The exportation of wool was also permitted, that of rams alone being subject to duty.

Such were the principal measures used to modify the tran-

sition from the continental blockade to a free marine commerce. We have already said that the duty was suppressed on foreign raw materials, such as raw cotton, dyes, dyeing woods, which Napoleon had overtaxed as articles connected with British commerce. Cotton manufactured goods were still prohibited, in order to afford the home manufactures an absolute protection. A duty was put on iron equivalent to the difference between the price of that article in the English and French markets; and as to goods of large consumption—such as sugar and coffee—the duty imposed on them, being exclusively for the benefit of the exchequer, was much diminished, and this was done with a view to lessen the incentives to smuggling, which had much increased since the return of peace. Lastly, foreign refined sugar was prohibited, and the exportation of our agricultural products was declared free or nearly so.

These measures, conceived in a praiseworthy spirit of moderation, met with general approbation. The government was thus alternately supported and checked by the chambers, that had become the tutelar authority, beneath whose shelter all the aggrieved classes of the community flocked. Still, some men who entertained exaggerated ideas of liberty often expressed regrets that the Chamber of Deputies did not act in a more decided manner. These men wished, for example, that the chamber had unconditionally rejected the law concerning the press. But by making this law temporary, the Chamber of Deputies had preserved the principle of liberty, and for prudent men that was enough; for to go further would have been to give the crown a check which would have weakened the kingly power, and deeply irritated the Bourbons against the new order of things. Politically speaking, this mode of conduct was evidently the wisest.

The Chamber of Peers, on the other hand, had not acted less wisely than the Chamber of Deputies. The peers had thoroughly discussed the law of the press, and had passed it after retrenching the preamble, which seemed to imply that the censorship was a principle of the Charter. The peers addressed an excellent reply to the minister of the interior on the occasion of a report presented to the chambers on the state of France. Napoleon, we must remember, caused a statement to be every year laid before the legislative corps of the position of the empire, in order to ascertain the general state of progress. The new government thought it well to follow this example, and took advantage of the opportunity to dilate upon the state of desolation in which the empire and the Revolution had left France. The statement of the minister of the interior, considering France from one point of view, was only true in the description made of the miseries resulting from war. The Chamber of Deputies

replied to this document by a simple vote of thanks; but the Chamber of Peers, of whom two-thirds were members of the Senate, would not allow the Revolution nor even the empire to be so unjustly treated. The peers made a thoughtful reply, in which were recounted the immense benefits that France owed to the application of the principles of 1789; to the abolition of wardenships, and all the shackles that formerly fettered manufactures in the interior of France; to the division of landed property; to the increase in the number of landed proprietors, the improvement of land, the establishment and advancement of manufactures; and after recapitulating these various benefits, the peers added that they saw in these things, as well as in the peace and liberty for which France was indebted to the Bourbons, motives for hoping a speedy return of public prosperity. The reply, though perfectly respectful, was dignified, veracious, and pointed.

It was evident that the two chambers, though not so enthusiastic as the liberal party, deserved the confidence of enlightened men, and had begun to obtain it. They were also gradually acquiring the power of restraining and supporting the government, two conditions alike desirable. Unfortunately, the opposition that the government met, though it did not irritate the members against the constitutional régime, had not in any way ameliorated their feelings. The king was pretty much as usual—that is to say, tranquil, considering political questions quietly, and inclined to allow his ministers to do as they pleased when the principle of his authority, or any of the essential interests of the emigration, were not in question. To these interests he was deeply attached. Thus, with regard to the national property, he actually did himself violence; and had it been in his power, he would have restored it to the ancient proprietors. He had especially disapproved the arrest of MM. Dard and Falconnet, authors of the two pamphlets that condemned the irrevocability of the national sales. After a short imprisonment, these two lawyers had been set at liberty, amid the loud applause of the high emigrant party, who had visited and offered them the most lavish attentions during their short captivity, and continued to throng their houses after their liberation. The king also took part with his bodyguards in their quarrels with the national guards and the soldiers, and expressed his intention of supporting them at all hazards. His ministers, without contradicting him, contented themselves with trying to prevent new collisions, or to correct the effects when they had not been able to prevent the cause. With these exceptions, the king allowed his ministers to follow the bent of their inclinations. As to the Count d'Artois, who had returned from St. Cloud to Paris, after an absence induced by ill health and

bad humour, he, as usual, made himself very busy. He turned an attentive ear to those provincial petitioners who came to beg places as a recompense for their loyalty, made them promises that he could not fulfil, and sympathised in their exaggerated feelings, which made him more and more the object of the hopes and love of the ultra-royalists. Influenced by a spirit of curiosity, a fondness for meddling in government affairs, and the distrust that characterises weak minds, he had allowed a kind of police to gather round him, composed of the plotters of every régime—the worn-out remnants of former police forces —who sought at what was then called the Pavillon Marsan, the prince's residence at the Tuileries, employment that they were refused in the government police. The prince was delighted to receive through these channels, reports, either annoying or alarming, which he carried to the king, to prove to him that he was badly served, or that he had made a bad choice in his officials; and that whilst he was reading his classic authors, the monarchy was undermined, and threatened with fresh calamities. Louis XVIII., being privately informed by M. Beugnot of the groundlessness of the information brought by Monsieur, had several times enjoined his brother to give up this gossiping, and allow him to live in peace. The Duke d'Angoulême, the eldest son of Monsieur, was not very talented, but he was prudent and modest, and did not pretend to play a more important part than that allotted him. He was then travelling in the west, endeavouring to recover for the royal authority that respect which in these provinces had declined very much. The other son, the Duke de Berry, who was not deficient in talent, but uncontrollably irritable, had at first succeeded with the troops, to whom he paid the most lavish attentions; but he ultimately offended them by the violence of his temper, which he had at first restrained, but could not entirely suppress, and which became more apparent as each succeeding day proved the difficulty of attaching the army to the Bourbons. Thus these three princes, notwithstanding their difference of disposition, participated too largely in the prejudices of their friends to be able to resist their influence or avoid their errors. Scarcely a day passed that some manifestation on their part did not add to those incidents of which party ill-will is only too glad to profit.

The 15th of August was the day on which, under the empire, the feast of St. Napoleon was celebrated. It would have been better to take no notice of the day, and allow it to pass unobserved. But the royal family wished, on the contrary, that the day should be still a fête, but a royalist fête. The 15th of August was the day on which Louis XIII., in gratitude for the pregnancy of Anne of Austria, had by a solemn vow placed France under the protection of the Blessed Virgin.

However interesting this historical souvenir might be, it would have been well to consider the actual circumstances of the time before enjoying the pleasure of recalling it. But the Bourbons did nothing of the kind, and ordered a solemn procession throughout France to revive and confirm the vow of Louis XIII. At Paris the princes walked in the procession, carrying tapers in their hands, and this spectacle did not produce a favourable effect on those whom the religious zeal of the Bourbons was calculated to offend. The half-pay officers were much amused by the devotion of the princes, and the soldiers bought candles to celebrate the feast of St. Napoleon by illuminating their barracks. It was not without considerable difficulty that this seditious illumination was extinguished in the evening.

A manifestation of a different character produced on the 29th of August a not less disagreeable effect. The king was invited by the city of Paris to a magnificent banquet, and went to dine at the Hôtel de Ville, which he had not done since his return to France. Scarcely was he arrived when it became necessary to appease a quarrel that arose between the bodyguard and the national guards. The bodyguard wanted to occupy the inner apartments, and banish the national guard to the outer. This was a pretension that involved inconvenience, for the national guard was, in fact, the city of Paris itself that took up arms to do honour to the king, and at the Hôtel de Ville the members of the national guard were in their own home. To banish them to the gate of the palace, whilst the bodyguards occupied the interior, would be a strange forgetfulness of the decencies of life. The quarrel became warm, the king took part in it, and it was agreed that the national guards and the bodyguards should occupy in equal numbers the inner apartments of the Hôtel de Ville.

The fête commenced by a dinner to the king; a ball was to follow. The magnificence and taste displayed on this occasion were worthy of the great city that received its king, and of the august guest that she received. Louis XVIII. sat at the chief table with the princes of his family, and admitted to the same table, by an infraction of ancient customs, thirty-six ladies. In this number were comprised the most distinguished ladies of the ancient court, and only three or four of the modern nobility. But this was not the most remarkable circumstance of the entertainment. The prefect, standing behind the chair of the king, waited on the monarch, and the prefect's wife, in the same attitude, waited on the Duchess d'Angoulême. The members of the municipal council performed the same services for the princes. It is true that in earlier times princes and even kings had waited upon emperors, but we may add,

without adopting any vulgar democratic prejudice, that the time for such exhibitions had passed away. Napoleon, with all the prestige of his glory and his power, had not been able to renew these customs, but he had never tried the experiment on so large a scale. The morrow of the fête at the Hôtel de Ville, the court flatterers were loud in their encomiums on the magnificence and moral beauty of the spectacle presented on the previous evening. They spoke of the fêtes of the Revolution and the empire with profound contempt; they said that neither had ever presented anything like what they had just witnessed; that it was legitimate authority alone, recognised and accepted by all, that could command such a spectacle; and that those who had the happiness of witnessing it, would preserve during their lives ineffaceable recollections of the scene. Those sycophants dealt out in this way commonplaces that are uttered after every public fête, and which obtain favour only with those who have partaken of the banquet. It is true, and happily so, that even in our days crowned heads can still command respect, but it is when they exhibit much virtue, simplicity of manner, and correctness of taste, and testify for the rest of mankind a respect equivalent to what they demand for themselves.

The masses judge by their eyes, and for the most part form their opinion of the moral strength of a government by its external manifestations. The part played by the magistrates at the city feast with regard to the king was in their eyes only a counterpart of the task that certain men would wish to impose on France herself; and they connected the scene enacted at the Hôtel de Ville with the extravagant acts in which certain landed proprietors had lately indulged in Normandy, Brittany, Languedoc, and Provence. Some of these seigneurs required that in their village churches the incense should be swung before them; others insisted that the consecrated bread should be offered to them before being presented to the municipal authorities; these pretensions had induced ridiculous contests, accounts of which had been eagerly propagated by the journals, and the acts themselves denounced in the chambers. But these incidents would have been trifles under a staple and rigorously legal government, consistent with the institutions it had granted and animated by the spirit displayed in the chambers. Unfortunately such a spirit could not exist in a ministry that had neither unity, head, nor a steady principle of conduct, and was, consequently, without influence. M. de Montesquiou, minister of the interior, had more direct intercourse with the country than any of his colleagues. His manners were amiable, when he laid aside the self-sufficiency of which he was sometimes accused; he was

moderate, considering his birth and the party to which he belonged; he spoke with fluency, and was listened to with attention in the chambers, but he was, spite of these advantages, the most incompetent of the ministers, because he possessed neither firmness nor application to business. After recalling the special commissioners, he had left the imperial prefects in office, without entering into any explanation, without telling them whether they should be continued in office or be dismissed. It was reasonable enough to retain special functionaries, such as clerks in the finance, the roads and bridges, the war and marine departments; nothing could be better, for it would have been difficult to find substitutes for the men who filled these places. But it was a dangerous experiment to retain in office the prefects who were exclusively political personages, and who were supposed to represent literally the spirit and sentiments of the new government. However, for want of suitable men, M. de Montesquiou had been obliged to continue in office a great number of the prefects of the empire, for the royalists, long removed from the sphere of business, were unfit for these posts. It would have been wiser to have transferred these men to new departments, which would have given their appointment a sort of royal sanction, and spared them the annoyance of appearing self-contradictory in the eyes of their fellow-functionaries.

M. de Montesquiou had taken none of these precautions; he contented himself with appointing as prefects and sub-prefects in some departments certain ancient nobles who were reputed fit for public business, and these he left to act according to their own inclinations, without entering into any explanation about the imperial prefects. The consequence was that the royalist prefects indulged all the passions of partisans, and the imperial prefects who were retained in office exhibited extreme weakness of character, fearing to excite the anger of the royalists. So one party boldly did the evil, and the other complacently allowed it to be done, and suffered it to be publicly said that the Charter was a temporary expedient; that the Bourbons, once firmly fixed on the throne, would complete the restoration by reviving the tithes and restoring the property of the church and the emigrants. To obviate the commission of all these errors, the minister would have been obliged to read a voluminous correspondence, and reply immediately to all these letters, and give directions; in a word, he would have been obliged to act, and of this M. de Montesquiou was incapable. He scarcely seemed to perceive the most serious accidents, even when followed by a scandal like that connected with the Bishop of Rochelle; and when forced upon his

attention, he interfered with a cold inefficacious letter. M. de Beugnot, a man of high intelligence, to whom the direction of the police was confided, had foreseen this state of things, and had sent into the departments sensible enlightened agents, who had sent him a succession of well drawn up reports, describing the strange position of France at that period. It was a delicate task to communicate these reports to Louis XVIII., for it was in other words to denounce as mad, and sometimes as very criminal, his most zealous friends. When M. Beugnot happened to receive a very piquant report, one capable of amusing a sarcastic monarch, he profited of the opportunity to lay the truth before his eyes. Louis XVIII. read the report, returned it to M. Beugnot, and contented himself with joining his minister in a laugh against persons whom he designated the friends of his brother. Things remained in this state, and such was the entire system of government. But the weakness of the administration was confessedly acknowledged, and the princes persuaded themselves that they ought to appear in person, that their presence would animate and subdue every heart, and kindle on every side the flame of loyalty. They were strangely mistaken, and did not perceive that instead of diminishing they were about to increase the evil. Good government on the part of the king under such circumstances would have consisted in restraining his friends, but sending the princes into the provinces was only exciting the popular feeling, whose sole fruit would be some few acclamations of loyalty, vain as the acclamations of the populace generally are, who applaud when their passions are roused, and forget on the morrow the shout of the previous evening, ready to utter a different cry on a new morrow should their passions be aroused in favour of an opposing cause.

It was thought prudent to send one of the princes immediately to the west, which was the most disturbed part of France. The Duke d'Angoulême was selected for this purpose, and a better choice could not be made. The prince consecrated the months of July and August to his tour. It was decided that in September and October the Count d'Artois should visit Champagne, Burgundy, Lyons, Provence, Dauphiné, and Franche-Comté, and that at the same time the Duke de Berry should visit the frontier provinces, where the soldiers were stationed in great numbers.

The western provinces, that is to say, Lower Normandy, Brittany, and Vendée, had greatly offended Louis XVIII., because they seemed to make little account of him, and spoke much more of M. de la Rochejaquelein and other royalist chiefs than of the king himself. The insurgents of these provinces, as we have already said, had assembled, and armed

LOUIS XVIII.

themselves at the expense of the blues, whose muskets they seized; they recalled their ancient chiefs, and elected new ones in cases where the former had died, and obeyed these leaders much more strictly than they did the government. To the Duke d'Angoulême was confided the task of informing them that there was a king in France, that there was but one, and that it was his authority alone they ought to recognise and obey. To avoid fixing public attention on a journey into provinces formerly insurgent, the prince announced his intention of visiting the seaports of the English Channel, that is to say, Brest, Nantes, Rochelle, &c., &c. Conformably with this announcement, he left the country of the Chouans on the left, and proceeded directly through Lower Normandy to Rennes and Brest. He was received with a warmth of feeling and demonstrations of joy which might be naturally expected in provinces where his presence brought back the memory of many sufferings endured for the Bourbon cause, and where there were numbers of old men to whose eyes these memories brought tears. The prince found that the royalists, both ancient and modern, spoke very lightly of the Charter, and looked upon the maintenance of the national sales as a merely temporary act of prudence; they considered the Concordat as another kind of Charter, that had lost its force on the abdication of Bonaparte. He found the people disposed to regard the taxes as a remnant of imperial tyranny that ought to be cast aside as soon as possible. They were, besides, determined not to suffer the exportation of corn, though decreed by a royalist government. The holders of national property were alarmed, and ready to combine for self-defence. The magistrates were distrustful, and expecting with anxiety the new investiture they had been promised; and lastly, the army was dispirited, hostile in feeling, and scarcely respectful in manner. The prince had not sufficient penetration to appreciate the tendency of this state of things, but he possessed sufficient good sense and uprightness to perceive that it was opposed to order, and in direct opposition to the promises made by the king, which, in his opinion, ought to be honourably fulfilled; and he spoke admirably well on every point with the exception of religion, for on that subject the Bourbon family held most dangerous opinions. The prince took especial pains to persuade the people that there were not two kings, one residing at the Pavillon de Flore, called Louis XVIII., an ancient Jacobin, as the provincialists called him, very crafty, and making promises that he never intended to keep; the other, the Count d'Artois, residing at the Pavillon Marsan, whose heart was filled with the true sentiments of a good royalist: the former represented by the prefects, who ought not to be either obeyed or believed, the second by some Chouan chiefs whose advice

alone ought to be listened to and followed. The prince declared that there was but one king, that his orders ought to be obeyed, the taxes paid, and corn allowed to be exported; that the holders of national property ought not to be disturbed; in a word, that people ought to live peaceably and enjoy the restored public tranquillity, and allow it to be enjoyed by others. He spoke less prudently to the priests, in whose errors he seemed to participate, excepting in what concerned tithes and church property. He strengthened as much as he could the legal authorities, called forth the enthusiasm of the masses by the mere fact of his being a Bourbon, and satisfied honest men by his moderation and uprightness, but unfortunately did not fascinate anybody, and after having traversed Laval, Rennes, Brest, Lorient, he left the country as disturbed as he found it, because, though he spoke rationally, his presence excited deep emotion, and at that moment emotion of all kind was an evil, because it awakened passions that ought to have been suppressed.

To visit Nantes was an important point. This city contained a rich commercial population, attached to the principles of the Revolution, but detesting its excesses, of which many cruel instances had occurred before their eyes, and hating as strongly the Vendean insurrection, and discontented with the arrogance of the nobility on both banks of the Loire. The people of Nantes entertained an exceeding dislike to Napoleon's government, because under that their commerce had been destroyed, and this aversion naturally inclined them to look favourably on the Bourbons, who brought with them peace and the Charter. But the extravagances of the priests and the emigrants on the one hand, and on the other the difficulty they found in re-establishing their commerce, had rendered them discontented. They bitterly regretted the Mauritius, attributed to the English the worst designs, and entertained an ill-feeling against the Bourbon government on account of the partiality shown to England. Our colonies, on which the merchants of Nantes had reckoned so much, were now under the protection of the British flag, stocked with European produce, and under existing circumstances no great traffic could be expected in that quarter. Influenced by all these motives, the people of Nantes were sincere royalists, already somewhat disappointed in their hopes, but still perfectly constitutional. The Vendeans having announced their intention of erecting a post on the left bank of the Loire, bearing the inscription, "Here Vendée commences," the Nanteans declared they would erect a post at the gates of their city, with this inscription, "Here Vendée was foiled."

The Duke d'Angoulême was well received by the Nanteans;

he addressed them in a tone of moderation that produced an agreeable impression, and brought them back to an excellent frame of mind. On quitting Nantes, he journeyed through the centre of Vendée, stopping first at Beaupréau. He was now in the "Bocage," this wooded and almost inaccessible country, where nobles lived after a patriarchal fashion with their tenants, whom they had formerly led to battle against the armies of the republic. In these rural districts there abode much sincerity of feeling and simplicity of manners, and very little of the spirit of intrigue and brigandage that had characterised the progress of Chouannerie. The peasants of the Bocage were tolerably quiet under the direction of their seigneurs, who bade them have patience and obey the orders of the king. The only symptom of insubordination exhibited by these people was a reluctance to pay the taxes, which they hoped to see soon abolished. About five or six thousand of them arrived at Beaupréau, with their seigneurs and their white banners, deeply touched by the sight of the prince, as was natural when they recalled the many struggles, the many sorrows, and heavy losses they had endured in the royal cause. Their language was not unreasonable; besides, they remembered the concessions made since 1789, and had no wish to see tithes and feudal rights revived. Here, in the centre of the Bocage, many touching scenes had taken place, and scarcely one that could awaken regret. At Bourbon-Vendée, the prince found the public spirit less simple and less innocent amongst the people of the Marais. In this region the people were less agricultural than commercial; they were fond of excitement, and assumed a certain importance; they smuggled and evaded the payment of taxes, and exhibited on the whole rather turbulent passions. The clergy especially displayed a total want of common sense. The prince repeated here to those who came to hear him what he had already said throughout his progress, and his discourse was not without effect. He afterwards repaired to Rochelle, where he might have done a great deal of good by receiving the titulary bishop, against whom the clergy of the diocese had revolted, preferring the ancient bishop, who had not given in his resignation. Unfortunately, the Duke d'Augoulême, who was the most pious of the Bourbon princes, refused to receive the titular bishop, and by this conduct gave a most deplorable contradiction to M. de Montesquiou's letter. The "little church" was transported with joy, and became more arrogant than ever, for no act could be more significantly favourable to her than a refusal on the part of the prince to receive the prelate *en fonction*, to whom the government had but lately enjoined a complete obedience. This was declaring by the mouth of the prince that the

official government was a delusion, of which nobody ought to be the dupe.

At Bordeaux, the prince found himself, so to speak, in his capital. It was there that the Bourbons had first appeared on their return to France, and the Bourbon who represented the family on that occasion was himself. But at Bordeaux, as elsewhere, the first fervour of the people had passed away, as well as their alluring hopes. After having looked upon the English as liberators, and also as extensive consumers of their produce —for they had carried off and drunk a great deal of wine—they were exasperated against them, since they had learned the loss of the Mauritius and the state of our colonies, whose markets were filled with British merchandise. And the Bordelais were, besides, displeased at some imprudent outbursts on the part of the Guyenne nobility, and especially irritated by the obstinate maintenance of the *droits réunis*. Hatred of the English, dissatisfaction against the nobility, and irritation against the *droits réunis*, were the three prevailing sentiments of the Bordelais, and which the Duke d'Angoulême was called upon to remove or at least moderate. The prince did all in his power, and admitted—which was true—that the English had not acted like generous conquerors, but maintained that they had not done anything to prevent the revival of French commerce, and that with a little time and industry trade would again flourish. He treated the rich citizens with distinction, and finally insisted on the absolute necessity of the indirect taxes, without which the expenses of the State could not be met. On this point, he succeeded in producing an effect on the minds of the more enlightened of the Bordelais merchants.

After leaving Bordeaux, the prince repaired to Mont-de-Marsan, Bayonne, Pau, Toulouse, and Limoges, making sensible speeches everywhere, giving here and there useless advice, and exciting unintentionally the passions of the royalists more than was beneficial either to the interests of France or his family. He returned to Paris by Angers and Mans.

Angers was one of the most disturbed and one of the most important cities of the west. The citizens and the nobility held opposite opinions on every subject which at that time occupied public attention. The infantry of the national guard was for the most part composed of the citizen class, and the cavalry of the nobility, because the latter, being richer, could provide for the maintenance of horses. The cavalry had adopted a special uniform, which they called the "Vendean uniform," and which, notwithstanding reiterated commands from Paris, they refused to lay aside. The cavalry had, moreover, declared their intention of exclusively surrounding the prince, and constituting themselves his personal guard. These pretensions were exhibited

in more than one place, and especially at Mans, in the centre of the ancient country of the Chouans. But the latter had announced a more serious project, which was no other than to assemble to the number of twenty thousand, with their chiefs and banners, and so accompany the Duke d'Angoulême during his stay in the province. During more than two months previously the prefects of Angers and Mans had used every effort to prevent manifestations of this kind, but had not succeeded. However, as the Duke d'Angoulême drew nearer, thanks to several sage admonitions emanating from the prince, the prefects succeeded in making their silly fellow-citizens listen to reason; and at Angers in particular the cavalry guard promised to abstain from all pretentious display, and the infantry made a like promise. Notwithstanding these pacific assurances, when the prince arrived at the gates of Angers, and the authorities, accompanied by the troops, went out to meet him, a company of the infantry national guards, who suspected the intentions of the cavalry, broke the line of the cortège, and suddenly surrounded the prince, whom they placed in a kind of square. Neither the prince nor the military authorities dared act with severity, for the innovators were supported by public opinion, and the prince was obliged to enter the city escorted in this fashion. Having arrived at Angers, he determined to make both parties feel his authority. He dissolved the company of infantry that had disturbed the tranquillity of the fête, but adjusted the balance by addressing a sharp remonstrance to one of the principal nobles. "It is you, sir," he said, "who wished to be here more king than the king himself; it is you who wish that the soldiers should present arms to you and obey you, instead of obeying the legally constituted authorities; it is you whose pretensions disturb a country where you ought to give an example of peace and submission to the laws. Royalists such as you are more dangerous than the most formidable enemies. You may withdraw."

This scene, which soon became the subject of conversation throughout the city, delighted the citizens, and would have produced a highly beneficial effect had it been made known through the entire of France. But the journals were forbidden to allude to the circumstance. The prince afterwards pardoned the company of the national guards that had been dissolved, allowed it to be formed again, and left all the sensible people of Angers perfectly satisfied with him.

At Mans, the Chouan chiefs had been induced to listen to reason, an effect that was in a great measure attributable to the fact that they were not able to enlist so many of their old soldiers as they had expected, and amongst the new very few could afford to make a journey of fifteen or twenty leagues at

their own expense to take part in a political demonstration. The prince was consequently spared some annoyance. But he saw many ardent royalists, numbers of old soldiers, remnants of the civil wars, who gave utterance to sentiments by no means moderate, without, however, proceeding to any vexatious demonstration. The prince returned to Paris about the middle of August. He had set out on his journey with the intention of doing good, but it had been his fate, in several instances, to do evil, by unintentionally exciting districts that most needed to be tranquillised.

Immediately after the return of the Duke d'Angoulême, the Count d'Artois proceeded to visit Champagne and Burgundy. He was authorised to make large promises of government favours, and not to refuse any merely honorary distinction, the measure in the latter case not depending either on the budget or the tyranny of custom. He could confer on the majority the order of the lily, on military men and magistrates the cross of the Legion of Honour, on select royalists the cross of St. Louis, and he was not a man to keep his hand closed when he had the king's permission to open it. He first visited the banks of the Seine and the Aube, and particularly the cities of Nogent, Méry, Arcis-sur-Aube, Brienne, Bar-sur-Aube, and Troyes, where the war had made fearful ravages. He found part of the population sunk in wretchedness, and living in the midst of ruins. He was compassionate and demonstrative; he was touched by all the sorrows he beheld, he did not conceal his emotion, and won the affection of the sufferers by the sympathy he displayed. As he journeyed along, he melted in tenderness over those that were afflicted; he even wept with them, he called them his friends, his children, and promised to acquaint the king with their misfortunes, as if the king possessed the means of remedying these woes. The minister of finance had taken precautions against the prodigality of the prince, and laid it down as a principle that the State could do nothing for the districts ravaged by the war; that the utmost amelioration that could be afforded would be the reduction of the taxes, but that only in cases where the impossibility of payment was proved. Monsieur promised all the districts he visited to petition for exemption from taxes; he even promised them loans of money, and gave them permission meanwhile to cut down 120,000 trees in the State forest, to help in rebuilding their houses. To these aids, which were only just and of some importance, he added alms as large as the civil list permitted, which was already burdened by grants made to the emigrants —to these aids he added the decoration of the lily, which he bestowed at the rate of five or six hundred at a time, relieved occasionally by some crosses of the Legion of Honour or St.

Louis. He quitted the people of these districts, leaving as the chief consolation of their sorrows the emotion caused by a prince's visit; and hope, which, whether groundless or well-founded, always cheers the human heart.

After this visit to the provinces, suffering from the effects of war, the Count d'Artois went from Troyes to Dijon. Dijon was an ancient parliamentary city, inhabited by an old *noblesse de robe*, formerly well educated, still very pretentious, and unwilling to recognise any other liberty than that of the privilege of *remonstrating*. The inhabitants of Dijon were consequently imbued with a bad spirit, and encouraged in these dangerous sentiments by a prefect who shared in them. They treated the bishop, who owed his elevation to the Concordat, very badly, and accused him of favouring the priests who had taken the civil oath, because he had taken it himself. These people declared openly, and with great self-sufficiency, that they could have arranged matters much better than Louis XVIII. had done; they pronounced the Charter to be a detestable production, but said that there was still time to repair the faults committed by acting differently when the opportunity presented itself. Thus whilst in Champagne there prevailed a certain degree of calm, disturbed solely by the sufferings resulting from war, in Burgundy, on the contrary, the public mind was extremely agitated, one portion of the inhabitants ardently desiring a return of the ancient form of things, a feeling that excited in the minds of the others a profound alarm. Monsieur, as might be expected, was received with transport by the royalists, in whose sentiments it was well known he shared; and with his usual facility of temper he did not question anything they told him, believed all he heard, and recommended patience. As to the manifestation which ought to have been the most significant, he did not fail to render it the most vexatious; for he refused to receive the bishop, a circumstance that made a profound impression in the district, and tended to increase rapidly the dissensions that were already beginning to disturb the clergy.

Monsieur found affairs in a bad position at Dijon: he left them in a worse state, and repaired to Lyon. This great city, at that time the most important in the kingdom, next to Paris, did not present a less troubled aspect than the others. On one side was a host of ancient royalists filled with recollections of the siege of 1793; detesting the Revolution and its results, and now united in a state of high enthusiasm under their former chief, M. de Précy. On the other side was the rich class of merchants and manufacturers, too young to remember anything of 1793, but sensitively alive to the memory of all Napoleon had done to repair the misfortunes of their city, and above all

to protect their trade, which during his reign had increased prodigiously. The maritime war, that had ruined Nantes, Bordeaux, and Marseilles, had, on the contrary, enriched Lyon. This city, situated on the Saône and the Rhône, at the conflux of all the fluvial communications with Germany, Switzerland, Italy, and Spain, had become the centre of a most active and extensive trade. The possession of Italy and the faculty of procuring thence raw silks at a low price, the facility of transporting rich stuffs to all parts of the continent, together with large orders from the imperial palace, were advantages that Lyon had fully appreciated, but which had visibly diminished since the opening of the seas; for the fluvial navigation lost what the maritime had gained, and the English having as much power in Italy as the Austrians, raised the price of raw silk by purchasing for their own consumption. If we add to these annoyances the exactions committed by the Austrians, and for which the Bourbons were unjustly blamed, we may comprehend the divers motives that rendered cold, if not hostile, to the royal cause the Lyonnaise merchants, as well as many of the richest and most influential persons of the country. The people, imitating these dissensions, were also divided. A small but enthusiastic number had joined the royalists; the remainder adhered to the opposite party. The royalists held their meetings in a café, since become remarkable by the violence of the speeches uttered there; and thence they sometimes issued in search of their adversaries, intending to provoke them to quarrel; but the latter, though far more numerous, were timid. The mayor, a quiet, honourable-minded man, a royalist by birth and connection, allowed himself to be carried away by the current of Lyonnaise passion, and quarrelled with the prefect, M. Bondy, who endeavoured in vain to allay the disorder. The prefect, though actuated by the best motives, was left to struggle alone between the extreme parties, for neither M. de Précy, head of the national guard, nor the Marshal Augereau, who commanded the troops, afforded him any assistance. The latter was despised by the troops and the bulk of the population for not having defended Lyon against the Austrians; he was also despised on account of his famous proclamation, and consequently possessed no influence, and could not unite the local authorities in a common line of conduct, at once firm and conciliatory.

It was into this blazing furnace that the Count d'Artois came to throw fresh fuel. His arrival excited violent commotion. The *precursor of legitimacy*, as he was at that time called, the brother of the king, and in the opinion of the extreme royalists, the real king, ought naturally to be received with enthusiasm. M. de Précy, commander of the national guard, and M. d'Albon, the mayor, accompanied by the most enthusiastic of the popu-

lation, received him at the gates of Lyon, and in his presence took an oath, in the name of all the inhabitants, to remain ever faithful to the Bourbons. The bystanders confirmed by their acclamations this pledge, which was taken in all sincerity. The prince was afterwards conducted through the city, and the municipal authorities, pausing in the most public places, renewed on their knees the oath never to acknowledge any other dynasty than the Bourbon. It was after this fashion that the prince was conducted to the palace, where he was to take up his abode. During the following days he visited the public establishments, and inspected several manufactories, whose owners were very much flattered by this distinction, and became for the moment good royalists. He was next shown traces of the siege, of which Napoleon had not allowed a great number to remain; and lastly, there were presented to him all that remained in the city of those that had assisted at that memorable siege, those who had been wounded or had suffered in any way on that occasion. They were introduced by M. de Précy, than whom none could be found better fitted for the office. The prince embraced these brave men with his accustomed cordiality, gave the cross of St. Louis to several, and afterwards laid the first stone of a monument intended to perpetuate the memory of the resistance made by Lyon to the national convention in 1793. No government had ever made more promises to forget than did the restored Bourbons, and no government had ever shown a more retentive memory! Monsieur was made to please those especially who were of his own opinion; and after having passed some days at Lyon, he won the hearts of all his own party, and enkindled passions which it would have been wiser to extinguish. He had not been unfriendly either to the prefect or Marshal Augereau, for he was incapable of offending anybody; but he had not strengthened their position. But he had, on the contrary, poured forth his feelings to the mayor, to M. de Précy, and some of their friends; telling them all, that without doubt many concessions had been made to the revolutionary party, but that it was better to be patient; that the king would in time repair all that was reparable, but that for the moment prudence should be observed, in order not to furnish pretexts to their adversaries. The prince was himself so imprudent, that the prefects of the environs having come to Lyon to visit him, he said to one, who had served under the empire and was noble by birth, "Well, my dear prefect, what do you think with regard to the national property? Do you think it could be restored to the ancient proprietors?" The prefect replied, that if the government wished to excite an immediate and violent revolution, nothing would effect that object more certainly

than making such thoughts public. The prince, perceiving that he had ill chosen his confidant, hastened to retract his opinion, and explain what he had said as best he could. We may divine the tone of his conversation with his own adherents.

The Count d'Artois left the city of Lyons in a state of violent excitement, and the inhabitants more at variance than ever. At Valence, he permitted a manifestation of feeling that produced a very bad impression. He was invited to a public dinner, that was served on several tables, in order to accommodate the numerous guests, amongst whom were the members of the council of the department. One of these, a rich and influential man, was son of a citizen who in former times had had the weakness to sign one of the numerous addresses presented to the Convention after the death of Louis XVI. Local malevolence had taken the trouble to recall this circumstance, and communicate it to the retinue of Monsieur. Some of the officers who accompanied the prince were seated at the table where the obnoxious member was to dine; they rose when he made his appearance, and retired with an affectation of disgust. This circumstance gave occasion to some sharp observations, and was within a few hours talked of throughout the district.

The prince traversed Avignon, where he pursued the same line of conduct, and finally arrived at Marseilles, where he was expected with extreme impatience.

This great city, formerly the queen of the Mediterranean, and which has again become so, though by means very different to what she then contemplated, had many reasons to hate both the Revolution and the empire, for through them she had not only ceased to be prosperous, but had been reduced to beggary. During five and twenty years she had seen more than three hundred merchant vessels fast anchored at her quays, and rotting there.* From time to time, indeed, but very rarely, a vessel laden with corn or sugar entered the port, having by a miracle escaped the enemy. The English had seized several within the mouth of the harbour, and even under the fire of the forts. This unfortunate city had fallen into fearful distress, and suffered so much, that the inhabitants would certainly have revolted, had not an energetic prefect, the Count Thibaudeau, restrained them with a hand of iron. The sole comfort afforded

* Born and brought up at Marseilles, this spectacle is still present to my eyes. I can fancy that I still see that vast number of motionless vessels, several lines deep, extending from what is called La Place de la Cannebière to the foot of Fort St. Jean. A child at that time, I was often brought down to the quays, where I acquired the habit of remarking these vessels; I knew their names, and can still recall their forms, as one does the houses of a street one is accustomed to frequent, and I never saw a single vessel change place during the latter years of the empire. Consequently, the fall of the empire occasioned an outburst of joy at Marseilles greater than I have ever witnessed at any time under any circumstances.

to their misery was when from time to time they committed to the flames the English merchandise they had seized, and which was burned in one of the principal squares of the city, before the eyes of a starving people, who saw destroyed in a few hours wealth that would have relieved all their wants. Consequently, the day of Napoleon's downfall and the return of the Bourbons was one of frantic joy; of a joy of which no description could give an idea. But joy is transient, for it frequently consists in picturing to ourselves unattainable happiness. And Marseilles soon witnessed the loss of the Mauritius, with which her merchants had kept up an extensive commerce. The Marseillaise conceived so great a hatred against the English, that they could scarcely endure to see them enter their harbour. The Marseillaise merchants found the colonies restored to us stocked with European, and wholly destitute of colonial produce; all the commercial relations were changed. Spain was in disorder —the Mediterranean was in the hands of the English and the Greeks—the harbour of Marseilles, formerly a free port, was now beset with imperial custom-houses; and lastly, the *droits réunis*, to which they imputed a great part of their sufferings, were maintained and confirmed. Consequently, the joy of the Marseillaise cooled down rapidly, and they sought with bitterness the cause of their delusion. Marseilles was not aware that a vast manufactural industry would soon be developed around her walls, that a new empire acquired by France—Algeria—and a general renaissance of the Mediterranean countries would render her the queen of the southern seas, and richer in her regal power than she had ever been; but, like many others, she sought for her lost crown in the past instead of the future. She fancied that her former prosperity resulted from her being a *free port*, a freedom that consisted in receiving without inspection, and without payment of duty, the merchandise of the entire world, which was exempt from dues within two leagues of the walls of Marseilles; as if removing a line of custom-houses to a distance of two miles could alter the fate of the city, or restore commercial relations once lost. A mart may facilitate commercial relations, but cannot create them. Hamburg, one of the most important trading cities in the world, owes its greatness not to being a free port, but to the Elbe, which renders it the thoroughfare of German commerce with the rest of the world. But Marseilles, poor emigrant, rendered frantic by thinking over the past, longed to become again what she called a *free port*, and fancied that under these conditions the restoration of the Bourbons would be for her the greatest of benefits, a benefit such as she had pictured in her fondest dreams.

The visit of Monsieur revived the former illusions of the

Marseillaise. They received him with transport, and entertained him with discourses more extravagant than any he had heard during his journey. They said they had wished to see amongst them the king, the true king, the independent king, emancipated from every restraint, in a position to secure the welfare of his subjects, unfettered by the shackles with which revolutionists sought to fetter him. This was saying, in other words, that they wished to see the prince removed from the influence of any sensible people who might raise an objection against making Marseilles a free port. In addition to all this, the prince heard vehement declamations against the *droits réunis*, but he conducted himself at Marseilles as he had done elsewhere. He told the Marseillaise that he was of their opinion; that they were certainly right; that he believed he could promise them speedy satisfaction, but that it was necessary to have a little patience, and give the king time to accomplish the contemplated good. The people were so happy to look upon him, to press his hands, that they seriously believed all he said, and under this impression prepared him magnificent fêtes. On such occasions, every city puts forth its best. Marseilles displayed her fine haven, which was far from being then what it has since become, and which on this occasion was made the scene of brilliant aquatic exercises. At the close of one of those days of amusement, as the shadows of night were closing in, a mountain that overlooks the harbour suddenly burst into flames, presenting the appearance of a volcano. This effect was produced by the use of a thousand casks, filled with inflammable materials. The mayor told the Count d'Artois that the picture presented to his eyes was only a feeble image of the ardent sentiments of the Marseillaise. After this exhibition, the prince was conducted to the principal theatre of the city. Here a scene occurred in which the public joy bordered on delirium. Monsieur had written to the king asking the freedom of the port. This request was strongly opposed in the royal council, but the king wrote to his brother that he hoped soon to obtain it by forcing the will of his ministers. The prince, regarding as done what was only promised, announced in the open theatre the freedom of the port as a *fait accompli*, whereupon the mayor, falling on his knees, kissed the prince's hand in the name of the entire population of Marseilles. The audience rose from their seats eight or ten times uttering cries of joy and gratitude.

After having passed some days amongst people that were nearly wild with joy, the prince repeated to the Marseillaise what he had already said to the Lyonnaise, to the Burgundians, and to the Champenaise—that the days passed with them had been the happiest of his life. He left Marseilles and went to

Toulon; then, retracing his steps, he visited Nîmes, where he might have done a great deal of good by restraining the Catholics and giving confidence to the Protestants, neither of which he did. He journeyed on to Grenoble, where he was warmly received by the royalist party, small in number, but fervent in feeling, and at length reached Franche-Comté.

The state of parties at Besançon was such as required the most prudent and steady conduct. A haughty nobility, entertaining the strongest prejudices, and the prefect of the department one of the local nobility, who excited instead of restraining the violence of party feeling, all of which circumstances had strongly indisposed the mass of the population. One fact in particular aggravated this state of things. The Archbishop Lecoz was located at Besançon. This prelate, of whom we have already spoken, was an old constitutionalist, a very worthy but obstinate man. He had afforded protection to the priests who had taken the civil oath; but in other matters his nomination had not occasioned any regret either to the spiritual or temporal authorities. On the downfall of the empire and the accession of the Bourbons, the "little Church" had poured forth its anger on the archbishop, the nobility had joined their voices to the outcry, the prefect had added fuel to the fire, and the result was a species of religious war, which, however, went no further than evil speeches, the combatants never proceeding to the use of arms. The prefect and his partisans announced openly that the prince, in passing through Besançon, would not receive the archbishop; to which the archbishop, with his accustomed obstinacy, replied, that he would not fail to appear at the levee of the Count d'Artois. Piqued by such boldness, the prefect declared, that if the archbishop kept his word, he would keep his, and have him arrested. Such were the remarks publicly exchanged at Besançon between the civil and religious authorities, and as no secret was made of these quarrels, all the inhabitants of the district heard and repeated these insulting speeches.

Monsieur might on this occasion have done what would have been both wise and salutary. He might, by his conduct, have contradicted the remarks of an imprudent prefect, by entering into at least official relations with the prelate; relations which were supposed to exist until the revocation of the Concordat, and which were, besides, an inevitable consequence of the letter written by the Abbé Montesquiou to the Bishop of Rochelle. Unhappily, it could not be expected that Monsieur would adopt such a line of conduct. Having arrived at Besançon, where he was greeted by the warmest demonstrations on the part of the ultra-royalists, he would not go to the cathedral for fear of meeting the archbishop there; and fearing that the prelate

might visit him, he caused it to be intimated that he would not receive him. The prefect had orders to transmit this communication, which he was only too willing to do. The bishop, as obstinate as his adversaries were imprudent, asked the prefect to put his communication in a written form, as he ought, in such a case, to assume all the responsibility of his acts. The prefect, quite as unreasonable as any of his party, wrote to the bishop; and not content with this exaggerated mode of proceeding, he completed the scandal by making the chief of the gendarmerie bearer of the document. This brave officer, who participated in the upright sentiments of his corps, whose members have at all times admirably discharged their duties, went to the archbishop, expressed his regret at what had occurred, and entreated him not to leave the episcopal palace during the prince's stay at Besançon, giving him at the same time to understand that he was empowered to enforce this advice. The prelate submitted for once, and remained within doors; but he wrote immediately to Paris, determined to denounce such scandalous proceedings to the two chambers. The effect produced in the surrounding district was immense. The clergy presented the appearance of two opposing forces, behind whom the people ranged themselves; but the numbers of the latter were unequally divided, the greater portion taking part against the nobility and those of the clergy who had excited these stormy proceedings.

Monsieur, continually fêted by his partisans, proceeded on his way towards Paris, having by his graceful manners won the affection of those whom he had not offended by some act of imprudence; having lavished the Cross of the Lily by thousands, and those of the Legion of Honour and St. Louis by hundreds. He left the districts through which he passed more disturbed than he had found them, nor had he, like the Duke d'Angoulême, given any good advice along his route. Monsieur arrived at Paris about the end of October.

Meanwhile his second son, the Duke de Berry, had performed an exclusively military journey along the frontiers. He had visited Maubeuge, Givet, Metz, Nancy, Strasburg, Colmar, Huningue, Belfort, and returned to Paris by Langres. He had given his entire attention to inspecting the troops and putting them through their exercises. He gave them standards, distributed crosses amongst them, and neither found nor left them satisfied. This prince, who was short of stature, endeavoured to imitate Napoleon in his bearing, and succeeded in gaining some degree of favour with the army during the first days of the restoration. But whether attributable to the difficulty of winning the affections of the malcontent soldiers, or to the faults of the government, or to the prince's own faults,

his success with the army was very short-lived. Instead of becoming more lavish of his attentions, in order to soothe those adverse spirits, he became angry when he encountered opposition; and especially during his last tour he abandoned himself to outbursts of passion, which the tongues of the malevolent retailed, exaggerated, and talked of in every direction, and which produced consequences as injurious as the acts of political and religious imprudence committed by his father.

The princes had not effected by their presence in the districts through which they passed all the good they hoped, though they had been received in the different cities with great enthusiasm. To render their journeys really useful, there should have existed in France a government determined in its views, immovable in its resolutions, and animated by the spirit of the chambers, a spirit at once liberal and moderate; and in addition to this, the princes should have declared on all occasions to their friends, a truth of which the latter seemed wholly ignorant, which was, that the Charter was a solemn act, whose entire consequences they were resolved to abide by. With such a government at Paris, and princes acting as its organs in the provinces, the exaggerated feelings of friends might have been calmed down, and the alienated affections of the people won back; and with the people thus gained over, the army might have been restrained, whose discontent would not have been, under such circumstances, a hopeless evil. But such a government as we have shown did not exist in France. There was a moderate-minded but careless king, who certainly did not restrain the actions of his ministers; but neither did he restrain his brothers and nephews in the commission of errors. There were princes totally divergent in their modes of conduct. One, the Duke d'Angoulême, sensible, but not brilliant; another, the Count d'Artois, amiable, but possessed by a spirit of interference, and never interfering in a profitable manner; a third, the Duke de Berry, rather intellectual, rather military in his tastes, but inconsistent in his conduct, alternately flattering or offending the army, not knowing how to respect the feelings of the soldiers, nor to make himself respected by them. There were ministers without a leader, without system; alternately bold or timid in their conduct towards the chambers, with the exception of one. This combination was not a government: it was a party in power; and a party in power is a naughty child wielding a thunderbolt.

The position of affairs had deteriorated considerably during the months of September and October, the months dedicated to the journeys of the princes. Various measures, the necessary consequence of the course public affairs had taken, had been very badly received, and met so determined a resistance in

the chambers that they were of necessity withdrawn. For example, the war minister, embarrassed by the unexpected expenses imposed on him, had endeavoured to economise as much as he could, and made an effort to save two millions out of the sum allotted for the support of the Invalides. Our protracted wars had greatly multiplied the number of wounded and indigent soldiers, and branch establishments had been erected for them at Arras and Avignon. The minister intended to lighten his expenses by giving those pensioners who since the alteration in the frontiers could no longer be considered Frenchmen, a small sum of money; and by sending to their homes a portion of those who were French, allowing them an annual pension of 250 francs. He fancied that this pension would be sufficient to support them in their villages, whilst that at Paris, in the Hotel Royal des Invalides, the support of one man cost 700 francs. Of the saving thus effected there could be no doubt, but the measure appeared very harsh; for 250 francs would be far from sufficient for men who for the most part possessed no family ties; and it was said that soldiers wounded in the service of their country were expelled from their asylum, whilst money and promotion were lavished on men who had fought against France. And in fact, a commission had been appointed to pay the army of Condé, and distribute aid amongst the old Vendean soldiers. Another measure, as ill-advised as that touching the pensioners, excited an equally great degree of discontent.

It became necessary to make an inquiry into the state of the funds appropriated to the maintenance of the Legion of Honour. The endowment had been converted into funded property, and was not sufficient to meet the expenses of the nominations made by Napoleon on account of the last war. It had been determined that no pensions should be attached to the appointments made since the last war until the resources of the institution would warrant the expense. But it was necessary to furnish funds for the establishments appropriated to the education of the daughters of poor soldiers. The establishments of St. Denis and Ecouen were to be supported as well as several secondary institutions, of which two were known as des Barbeaux and des Loges. These houses were filled with young girls, the greater number of whom had become orphans in consequence of our long wars. It was proposed to suppress three of these institutions—those of Ecouen, des Barbeaux, and des Loges, and to treat the young girls thus expelled from their asylum in the same manner as the wounded soldiers, by giving them a pension of 250 francs each. There was a circumstance that tended to complicate the question still more. The chateau of Ecouen belonged to the princes of Condé. It was therefore

natural to believe that in order to restore the chateau to its former masters, a number of young orphan girls were about to be thrown into the streets whose fathers had fallen in the service of France. When this intelligence became bruited about, the military, already discontented, became still more so, and the public caught up the same feeling of sympathy for these poor children, who could not live on 250 francs, and of whom some had neither father nor mother. The marshals took up the cause, and Marshal Macdonald remonstrated in the Chamber of Peers, of which he was a member, and even pleaded with the king, to whose presence he had access.

Lastly, an unfortunate project of the war minister with regard to the military schools completed this combination of ill-concerted measures. The minister wished to combine into one the three military schools of St. Cyr, St. Germain, and La Flèche, to give them, as he said, more unity, and *to allow the nobility of the kingdom to enjoy the advantages secured to them by the edict of January* 1751. A royal ordinance was accordingly issued decreeing the fusion of the three schools into one —that of St. Cyr. The general tone of the ordinance seemed to imply an intention of excluding the citizens from the military schools, in order to fill them exclusively with the nobility, by whom the profession of arms would consequently be alone exercised, as was formerly the case.

To describe the effect produced by these different measures would be indeed difficult. Though the opinions uttered by a discontented public, and the journals that acted as their interpreters, were of course exaggerated, still it was evident that in order to meet unreasonable expenses, such as the re-establishment of the king's household troops, or the pensions of emigrant officers, the misery of the army was increased; and it was no less evident that the project of introducing the ancient order of things was entertained, by which the nobility should enjoy all the high military grades. Remonstrances rose from every side. The importance of the right to petition is little felt in ordinary times, when there are no serious wrongs to be redressed; but if ever its utility was recognised, it was on the present occasion. Numerous petitions were addressed to both chambers. The Chamber of Deputies wished to hear the report immediately, and spite of the opposition of a minority devoted to the emigrants, and spite of the imprudence of another minority devoted to the opposite party, the Chamber of Deputies condemned the proceedings of the government by presenting the petitions in question, accompanied by a request couched in mild but positive terms, that the obnoxious acts should be revoked. The government was consequently obliged to undo its work. It was publicly declared that the allusion to the edict of 1751 did

not imply a preference for the nobility in the admission to the military schools. It was decided that the branch establishments of the Invalides should be supported until the demise of the soldiers who occupied them; that none should be sent home with pensions except at their own express wish; that the same rules should be observed with regard to the female orphans of the Legion of Honour; and that the houses of des Barbeaux and des Loges should be reopened for those young girls who either would not or could not return to their families.

The chambers, though moderate in tone and sincerely loyal, were always prompt to check an undue assumption of power on the part of the crown, and it would have been desirable that offended partisans had confided in the chambers, instead of seeking satisfaction and security elsewhere. But irritated passions look for more than justice—they seek for vengeance, and are not scrupulous in the employment of means. The half-pay officers who thronged the capital, some frequenting the salons of Paris, and others the public places, held language which every day became more violent and more irritating. Their audacity provoked the government, and brought down upon themselves inevitable punishment; and provocation followed provocation until the result was a kind of open war, which, beginning in angry words, might unfortunately terminate in violent acts.

Murat had up to this time, thanks to his defection, remained King of Naples. But his presence on the throne of Lower Italy disturbed not alone the Italians, but the Spanish and French Bourbons, who demanded his deposition at the Congress of Vienna. The rival police, one belonging to the government, the other to the Count d'Artois, indulged in all kinds of suspicions and inventions, and fancied that the agitation of the public mind resulted, not from the faults of the government, but from the action of hostile parties. Excited by the reports of these two police forces, the government sought elsewhere than in itself the cause of the evil, and fancied that Murat and Napoleon, who had been recently reconciled, and possessed considerable riches, made use of these to keep alive the hostile spirit of the military and unemployed functionaries.

Lord Oxford, a fantastic Englishman, of whom there are many such, had conceived an intense admiration for Bonaparte, a sentiment so contrary to the general feeling of his compatriots. He passed through Paris on his way to Italy, and was believed to be the bearer of a secret correspondence between Naples, the isle of Elba, and the discontented French military. The French government had a communication with the English embassy; Lord Oxford was arrested, not with the intention of depriving him of his liberty, but for the purpose of taking away his

papers. The examination of these papers caused a degree of surprise which the members of the government would not have experienced were they endowed with more self-possession. The most culpable document amongst these papers was one written by General Exelmans, and the guilty secret it contained amounted to very little, as we shall soon see. General Exelmans having heard that one of the allied armies was to be sent against Murat, wrote to this prince, under whom he had long served, and who had loaded him with benefits, saying that there were many officers as well as himself who would offer him their swords were the throne of Naples in danger. But there was not a word relative to the Bourbons of France, or to any project against their government.

This letter, though it did not contain a tittle of what had been suspected, irritated the king and princes exceedingly. They wished to avenge on General Exelmans all the imaginary conspiracies of which they had no proof, but in whose existence they persevered in believing. It was resolved to arraign him on a criminal charge of having kept up a correspondence with the external enemies of the State, a crime aggravated by the fact of his being an officer on active service. General Dupont, the war minister, though often weak, resisted on this occasion in the most prudent and honourable manner. He observed that the King of Naples had been hitherto recognised by all Europe; that France, though soliciting his deposition at Vienna, had not yet declared open war against him; that French subjects could consequently, without incurring the imputation of criminality, offer him their services; that no tribunal would think of attaching criminality to General Exelmans' letter; that the general, being on service, and consequently aware of the sentiments entertained by the court of France towards the court of Naples, might be accused of indiscretion and want of zeal, and thereby subject himself to be reprimanded, but nothing more. Though the king was quite as much irritated as the princes against General Exelmans, he comprehended the reasons adduced by the war minister, and admitted that a reprimand was the severest punishment that ought to be inflicted. The war minister sent for General Exelmans, and reproved him for his conduct, and for the moment this affair, destined at a later period to excite a terrible commotion, was suppressed, thanks to the wisdom displayed by General Dupont on the occasion.

The young officers who thronged Paris, and disturbed it by their remarks, quickly learned what had befallen General Exelmans, and though he had only suffered a slight punishment, they made a great noise about the matter. These gentlemen were soon furnished with another grievance of the same nature. General Vandamme was an officer of great merit, but of violent

temper; he held extreme revolutionary principles, calculated, if not to justify, at least to provoke calumny, and was wrongfully reputed a most wicked man. He shared with Marshal Davout the hatred of the enemies of France. Returning from a Russian imprisonment, he had been shamefully insulted in passing through Germany, and this incident ought to have excited a universal interest in his favour throughout France. But the effect was quite different, and the king was advised, should General Vandamme appear at the Tuileries, to make him an exception to the flatteries lavished on the heads of the army. No sooner had the general arrived at Paris than he repaired to the Tuileries on the day appointed for the reception of officers of his rank. He was refused admission to the palace, and the bodyguards expelled him, so to speak, from the royal dwelling. This old soldier, who had passed his life fighting for his country, became indignant at receiving such treatment from young men who had never heard a musket fired; he filled Paris with his complaints, and found many-tongued echoes of his grievances.

Whilst one of the oldest soldiers of France was treated in this manner, a report was suddenly put into circulation that the family of Georges Cadoudal had received a patent of nobility. Nobody could deny the courage of Georges, nor his devotedness, but neither could anybody approve the means he had determined to employ against the First Consul, and which he had acknowledged before the bar of justice. We need not say what bitter thoughts and violent expressions such a circumstance was calculated to excite.

Whilst young unemployed officers hurried restlessly from one part of Paris to another, there was one who lived quietly and in solitude. This was Carnot, who, after the defence of Antwerp, had retained the post of inspector of engineers, and was even presented to the king; but shunning the court and the revolutionists, he retired into one of the most remote quarters of Paris. He cared little about the insults to which the military were subjected, as he regarded them for the most part as giddy-headed men, but he was deeply moved at the manner in which the government treated the ancient patriots, whilst Chouan chiefs were raised to the rank of nobles. Carnot was a man of vigorous mind, but not a correct reasoner; he was a proud, honest man, led astray by the passions, and above all, by the logic of the Revolution; he was convinced that he exercised a legal authority, and was perfectly right in condemning Louis XVI. to death. Influenced by this belief, he came to the strange resolution of discussing the question of regicide, and discussing it in a memoir addressed to the king himself. He had not made up his mind as to the use he should make of this

memoir, but writing it was a consolation to his feelings. In this memoir, which was written with great vigour, bitterness, and irony, but which contained no insult against the royal authority, he discussed this fearful question of regicide, reproducing those arguments that prevailed in the days of the Convention.

Are kings inviolable? "This," he said, "is a serious question, decided in different ways at all times, in every country, and even in the Bible. In any case, this inviolability admitted many exceptions, for it could not be asserted that monsters like Nero and Caligula should be inviolable in the eyes of their people. Besides, the French nation in nominating the Convention had invested its members with a mission to judge Louis XVI. Had they judged well or ill? History would decide that question; but in any case, his judges were not called on to give an account to any earthly authority. They might have been mistaken, but they erred in good faith, and upon all occasions they had given proofs of an intrepid patriotism. Now they were attacked, and called criminals, but in whose name? by what right? France had by numberless addresses confirmed the judgment they pronounced, and raised the judges of Louis XVI. to the highest offices of the State: should France be called a regicide or the accomplice of regicides? But this was not all. Europe had lowered her uplifted sword before these men, and signed with them treaties such as that of Bâle. Should Europe, too, be designated a regicide? In short, who were these accusers who now returned from foreign lands to insult those amongst their countrymen who during five and twenty years had fought for France and for liberty? It was these very emigrants who, instead of making a rampart of their bodies for Louis XVI., had taken flight under pretext of making war on the Rhine; and who, in addition to the crime of bearing arms against their country, had committed the enormous error of exciting against Louis XVI. a storm of anger that entailed the destruction of the unfortunate king."

Such was the terrible logic of the old conventionalist, from which only one conclusion could be drawn, which was, that in these formidable times, whose events bore down the strongest minds, everybody had erred, and the wisest mode would have been to shelter everybody under the oblivion promised by the Charter. Unfortunately, the act of oblivion promised by one party, and asked by the other, was not in reality conformable to the wishes of either.

It appears probable that Carnot had not intended to print the memoir we have just analysed; but blinded by revolutionary prejudices, he believed he could get it presented to the king, and so discuss the question of regicide *tête-à-tête*

with the brother of Louis XVI. Though living so retired, he frequented the society of certain regicides, such as MM. Gard, Fouché, and some others, and to these he showed his memoir, impelled by the necessity of giving vent to his feelings. To give it to be read was to run the risk of soon seeing it printed; and in any case, if he desired a prudent counsellor, it was not such a man as M. Fouché whom he ought to have taken into his confidence. The memoir was scarcely shown to a few persons when it was copied, printed, and within a few days circulated as widely as M. Necker's famous financial report had been. It was printed by thousands, both in France and abroad. In fact, it chimed in with the prevailing passions of the hour, with the irritation of the revolutionists, who still formed a numerous party, and was equally gratifying to the holders of national property, who were still more numerous than the revolutionists; it accorded with the discontent of the military and the unemployed functionaries; it even pleased the liberal party, who certainly did not approve regicide, but who looked upon this memoir as a deserved retaliation for all the acts of indiscretion committed by the emigrants. Lastly, the emigrants themselves, in their anger, were eager to read a memoir universally talked of. All this was sufficient to render Carnot's memoir within a few days known—not alone throughout France, but throughout Europe.

As might be expected, this memoir produced a wonderful sensation amongst the emigrant party. This party replied; and the reply, as to justice and moderation of sentiment, was no ways inferior to the attack. Carnot was told that there were men who, if they possessed a gleam of common sense, would think themselves happy in being allowed to enjoy the impunity in which unprecedented goodness was willing to allow them to exist; that they ought to be satisfied, and seek an asylum in the most profound obscurity, and by such conduct win for themselves, if not indulgence, which would be impossible for such a crime as theirs, at least forgetfulness, which would be accorded them, on condition that they did not continually recall their existence to the execration of contemporaries, and that to their abominable crimes they did not add apologies still more abominable—that, as to the rest, their writings corresponded with their acts. The authors of the reply added, that amongst these men there was one whom they had had the weakness to set apart from his fellows, in giving him credit for some honesty and good sense, but that the puerility of his reasoning equalled its wickedness; that the authors of the 24th January were decidedly superior to the present writers; but that, in short, these men ought only to think of avoiding the observation of the indignant

world, and make up their minds, after having shed the blood of the fathers, to respect the repose of the sons.

But invectives were not the only reply. The government commenced a prosecution against Carnot's memoir. The author was summoned, and he proudly avowed what he had written, adding that he was not accessory to the publication, and his word was believed, for his adversaries esteemed his character more than they cared to acknowledge. Inquiries were made of several booksellers suspected of issuing clandestine publications, for the purpose of ascertaining what part they might have had in propagating the memoir in question. They were all brought up for examination—a circumstance which contributed not a little to increase the public agitation. The *voters* who assembled at the house of Fouché and Barras were very much excited, and made fresh advances towards the military, that is to say, towards the Bonapartists, who seemed every day more inclined to join them. Incidents soon multiplied, as if destiny had decreed that every person and every circumstance should in some way tend to hasten the approaching crisis.

It was with considerable reluctance, as we have seen, that the emigrants submitted to the article of the Charter that guaranteed the inviolability of the national sales. They never ceased complaining, and said that the Bourbons, having recovered the crown, believed they had recovered everything, and allowed those who had made great sacrifices for their cause to remain in distress. Private negotiations, from which much had been hoped, produced no great result, though supported by intimidation, violent sermons, and even the power of the confessional. The new proprietors expected to be paid if they gave back the property they held, and very few amongst them, particularly the peasants, would consent to give up possession, even on condition of receiving a reasonable price. Wishing to know what right they really possessed, they made inquiries, and found that the Charter and the chambers would afford them all-powerful protection. Consequently, all those that the clergy had not won over by disturbing their consciences firmly upheld their rights, and would not listen to any compromise. The government, conscious of its weakness in this matter, but willing to give some satisfaction to the men who complained that the restoration had been of no advantage to them, resolved to restore the unsold national property. The amount of this kind of property held by the State was very considerable, and consisted for the most part of timber. It comprised three or four hundred thousand hectares of forest land of great value. The Charter did not protect this property: it only protected the property already sold. There was one

circumstance connected with this projected restitution of property which rendered it particularly agreeable to the king and the princes, which was, that the property in question belonged for the most part to the old nobility, to families with whom they were personally acquainted, and with whom they were in daily intercourse; and to satisfy the wishes of these persons would be to silence the most troublesome grumblers. The restitution of this property was therefore determined on: it only remained to consider the arrangements.

Had this restitution been dictated by an unbiassed spirit of justice, it would have been carried out in a manner very different to what was designed. The high nobility were certainly not the most to be pitied, for they had by their imprudence contributed to aggravate the violence of the Revolution. It was the numerous emigrants of the lesser nobility and the bourgeoisie who, involved almost without being aware of it in the common disaster, had paid the price of our dissensions sometimes with their lives, and almost always with their property. These certainly deserved consideration; but the government ought to have relieved them without disturbing the public tranquillity, and without committing, for the advantage of these persons, acts of injustice as great as those from which they suffered, and the assistance thus afforded ought to have been distributed so as to aid those that deserved most pity and least blame. The principle might have been laid down, and put into immediate operation, that an indemnity was to be granted by the State, not to a few individuals, but to all who had lost their property; and that this indemnity was to be furnished in a great part by the State property. This indemnity might have been so distributed that the poorest should be best treated; and with this might have been combined a financial operation, based on the three or four hundred thousand hectares of timber still in the possession of the State, and to which, when the state of the exchequer permitted, two or three hundred millions of francs might have been added. By this means might have been accomplished a work, not alone of reparation, but of pacification. The ancient proprietors being indemnified, if not to the full extent of their wishes, at least as far as possible, would have been deprived of all pretext for quarrelling with the new holders, and the latter would have been left in peaceable possession. But no such idea was conceived.* The princes thought only of satisfying the ancient nobility, whose misfortunes had certainly the fewest claims on compassion, and who were the most importunate in their clamour. The crown held the landed property of these families, and the Bourbons

* The records that remain of the debates in council prove that this question was never even suggested.

thought only of restoring this property to satisfy and silence the owners, without reflecting that they were depriving themselves of a valuable pledge that might have served as basis to a general operation for alleviating the misfortunes of the entire mass of sufferers.

The bill on this subject was drawn up by a committee, of which M. Ferrand was president, and laid before the council for discussion. The principle laid down was the unconditional restoration of the property that the State had not alienated. But this principle, apparently so simple, presented serious difficulties in the application. For example, certain parishes possessed a considerable quantity of this unsold property, which was applied to the use of the hospitals. The sinking fund also possessed a portion, which served as security to the annuitants. To take back the lands possessed by the parishes would be to strip the poor and the sick. To take back the lands held by the sinking fund would be to injure public credit. Spite of their inclinations, the authors of the bill were obliged to abandon their project, and content themselves with holding out vague hopes to the proprietors of the unsold property. There was also property of this nature applied to certain public services, such as mansions converted into State offices, and works of art transferred to the different museums. For example, a portion of the Artillery Museum might be claimed by the Condé family, who, as was well known, would not be slow to assert its claims. Many serious inconveniences would have resulted from the restitution of this property; the idea was therefore abandoned, and it was decided that the State should retain this species of property, whether landed or personal, paying the value to the former proprietors. It was agreed that a certain sum should be added to the budget for this purpose. These difficulties being removed, another arose, whose importance became apparent after a few moments' reflection. The clause of the bill regarded the arrears due to the treasury by the new holders of property as being in reality due to the ancient proprietors. The principle laid down that the State ought to restore, as ill got, the property in question, was only saying in other words that the unpaid portions of the purchase money were really owed to the so-called legitimate proprietors. But as the institution of the laws about national property had kept pace with the depreciation of the assignats, and were consequently very complicated, there was scarcely a holder of national property whose possessions might not give rise to quarrels about pretended arrears, which would serve to reinstate the former proprietors. In fact, the passing of this law would put them in a position to commence law proceedings against all the holders of national property. It would be

arming them with a formidable weapon that might triumph over the protecting power of the Charter.

The clause in question would have passed without objection, thanks to the inattention of the members of the council, who were for the most part ignorant of business, if the sagacity and vigilance of the minister of finance had not raised an obstacle. He pointed out the bearing of the proposed measure, and the council, alarmed, immediately abandoned it. M. Ferrand did not persist. The bill was then submitted to the two chambers, with the proposed modifications.

Unfortunately, a statement of the motives that dictated the measure, and which were quite as important as the bill itself, had not been laid before the council. Even the king had not read it. The whole business was confided to the principles and talent of M. Ferrand, who was a man advanced in life, mild-tempered, well-informed, and a good writer; but he was obstinate, devoid of tact, and an ultra-royalist.

He had condensed his statement of motives into a sentiment, which was shared by the court, that the government, in restoring the unsold property of the emigrants, scarcely fulfilled its duty; that it was painful not to be able to do more, but that, in default of additional satisfaction, the government would give hopes of future compensation; in a word, that the government would do all that was possible at the time, and promise to do more at a future period.

M. Ferrand entered the Chamber of Deputies accompanied by MM. de Montesquiou and Louis, and read his statement in a low, drawling voice, which at first weakened the effect. In this statement, which was particularly addressed to the emigrants, the king apologised for not doing more for them, and for being so tardy in doing what he did. But on the morrow of a great revolution, obstacles spring up so rapidly that it is difficult to return to the ways of justice and truth. It was only slowly and with precaution that good could be effected. "Undoubtedly," said M. Ferrand, "*the king will rejoice in the happiness of those to whom he is about to restore their property, and he stood in need of this satisfaction to mollify the regret he felt at not being able to make this act of justice as complete as he could wish.* But he hoped that, thanks to the prudence of his administration, and thanks to the order observed in the public expenditure, the day would come when the state of the finances would diminish successively the painful exceptions necessitated by existing circumstances."

The intensity of this regret proved what violence the king did himself in adhering to the conditions of the Charter; and these vague but ill-defined promises, giving so much ground of hope to some, and consequently causing so much alarm to others,

could not fail to produce a bad impression. One passage in this statement produced a sensation of a different kind, resulting from an offence offered to the entire nation. Endeavouring, with a flagrant want of tact, to estimate the moral merit of those who had emigrated and those who remained in France, M. Ferrand added—"It is universally acknowledged at present, that so many good and faithful Frenchmen, in leaving their country, only contemplated a short separation. Wandering in foreign lands, they wept over the calamities of the country which, they still flattered themselves, they should again behold. It is well known that the fondest prayers of the French who remained at home, as well as of those who emigrated, were for a happy change in the state of their country, even when they dared not hope for it. The result of these misfortunes and convulsions was, that both parties found themselves in the same position: both had arrived at the same point; *the one party in following the right line, without ever deviating from it, and the other after having followed more or less the phases of the Revolution, amid which they had remained.*"

These words, though pronounced in a voice little calculated to excite the passions, produced a strong emotion, an emotion which gradually increased until it assumed the magnitude of an event. It was, then, a recognised fact in the eyes of the king that the emigrants alone had followed the *right line*, and that all other Frenchmen had more or less abandoned this line. And so the entire nation, with the exception of twenty or thirty thousand individuals, had deviated from the right path! And so all those who had lost their lives endeavouring to snatch France from the hands of furious demagogues had deviated from the right path! And so Malherbes, who had not followed the princes, but who died for having defended the king; and Boissy d'Anglas, who had nobly held his place in presence of the bleeding head of Féraud, had deviated from the right path! The king, Louis XVI. himself, was excusable only because he had failed in the journey to Varennes! And so all those who during twenty years had so ably governed France; all those who had died by hundreds of thousands to save her from the power of foreigners, or to exalt her to the summit of glory—all those had deviated from the right path! Desaix, Kleber, Marceau, Lannes, were all wrong-headed men, who had deviated from the *right line!* It was only those men who during five and twenty years had plotted or prayed incessantly that France might be at length conquered or invaded—it was these alone who had followed the right path!

These reflections arose at first confusedly before the minds of the hearers; but the next day they became more distinct, and the following day still clearer, until the strong impression

produced on the first day in the assembly became stronger on the succeeding days, and continued to increase. This feeling was transmitted by the members of the assembly to the minds of the general public, and passed from Paris to the provinces. Propagated by a press that was scarcely restrained by the censorship, the sentiment soon became as vivid as universal. In addition to this, M. Ferrand's unfortunate expressions were maliciously applied to every possible circumstance. The *right line* became all at once a proverb: everybody was on the *right line* or the *curved line*—that is to say, those who had emigrated possessed real merit. There were different degrees of merit, but those who had not emigrated were barely excusable. Though malevolence strangely exaggerated the sense in which these words ought to be taken, and attributed to them a significance that M. Ferrand never contemplated, it was unfortunately true that they did represent the opinions of the king, the princes, and the emigrants. When in the royal council the conditions that should determine the pensions of the emigrant officers were laid down, the princes drew a line of demarcation between the emigrants themselves. It was not sufficient to have followed the king or served under Condé to be entitled to a reward, for if these emigrants had returned to France without the sanction of the princes, their claim became less, and their pensions diminished proportionately. It was not, therefore, the mass of the nation alone that was excluded from the great merit of having emigrated; there were amongst the emigrants themselves some who, fatigued with ten years' exile, and thinking that their native land, pacified by the First Consul, was still a country worthy of being loved and inhabited, it was these, too, who had deviated in some degree, a degree that was quite appreciable, and which the committee appointed to award pensions was expected to determine exactly.

The universal belief of the country at this period was that the government was composed of emigrants imbued with all the principles of that party, and ready to put those principles into action if the opportunity served. This opinion, without being a definite condemnation of the government, was the foundation of much disaffection. But there were the chambers, upon whom the people could depend to check the government, and if they could not inspire its members with patriotic sentiments, which was not in their power, they could at least oblige them to listen to such. The chambers responded to the hopes placed in them, and did not betray their mission.

All the bureaux of the chamber received the proposed law as an act of justice, for even the liberal party wished to defend the principles but not the excesses of the Revolution. But in accepting the measure as an act of justice, they expressed

strong indignation against the avowed motives, demanded that they should be suppressed, and a vote of censure passed upon the minister who had drawn up and presented the bill, and that a public protestation should be made against his anti-national language.

The members of the committee appointed to examine the projected law were imbued with the sentiments of indignation expressed by the bureaux, and acted under the impulse of the moment. They passed the law, with some changes insignificant as to its operation, but very important as to its moral tendency. Thus, for the word *restitution*, *resignation* was substituted, which ignored all right on the part of the emigrants to the restored property. This property, being held by the State, was given up to the emigrants, in order to put an immediate termination to their distress. As to the property that had been applied to public services, such as to hospitals and the sinking fund, and of whose restitution the law made an exception *for the present*, the words *for the present*, which made the exception provisional, were suppressed, and by this means all promises with regard to the future were cancelled. The members of the committee requested the chairman to make his report the antithesis of the minister's statement of motives.

M. Bedoch, who was chairman, read his report in the chamber on the 17th of October, and condemned severely all that M. Ferrand had said. He announced that he was appointed to re-establish public confidence, which had been shaken by the imprudent expressions of the minister, who had attributed to Louis XVI. personally sentiments which the King of France ought neither to entertain nor express. The balance of good and evil in our vast Revolution could not be nicely discriminated, for it would be necessary to examine the conduct of those who by a misplaced zeal had accelerated the misfortunes of the king and of France. And even could such a task be accomplished, it ought not to be attempted. The king had promised to look on France as one large family, composed of his children, and he ought not to attempt to establish invidious distinctions, nor ought others to do so for him. The king's profound regret was spoken of; but the king ought to entertain no other sentiment than a firm determination to keep his promises, and amongst these promises none was more sacred than that which implied a respect for property, no matter from what source derived. As to the future, it was not possible to anticipate a time when the emigrants should be better treated than at the actual period, for it was to be hoped that the taxes would be always applied to the wants of the State.

The report, as may be seen, was firm and severe, and contained a direct lesson addressed to those higher placed than the minister.

Though the members of the chamber approved the report, they hesitated when the question of printing it was put. It had been printed in the ordinary way, like all reports; but discourses highly approved by the chamber were favoured by an order for a special reprint. The chamber dared not grant the latter distinction.

M. Ferrand, taking advantage of this hesitation, thought it afforded him a favourable opportunity of replying to the chairman; and for that purpose, making use of the most accredited of the royalist journals, he asserted that the chamber interpreted his speech in the same sense as himself, which was evident from the fact that M. Bedoch's statement was refused the honour of being printed.

No sooner was this assertion put into circulation than a sudden revulsion of feeling took place in the Chamber of Deputies. A member of the committee made a speech in which he reminded the house that the bureaux had demanded either the refutation or the suppression of the minister's discourse; that the members of the committee had therefore only obeyed the formal mandate of those by whom they had been nominated, and that the chairman had been their faithful organ. But in consequence of the doubts now raised, it was necessary that the chamber should pronounce a decided opinion, and declare whether the report in question had been approved by the members. The opinion of the chamber was now unmistakably expressed by a large majority. The report and the speeches made on the subject were ordered to be printed. The discussion on the bill still continued. It was long and stormy, and occupied the latter part of the month of October. The debate called forth a display of angry feeling on both sides. A member of the *right* (the fashion had already commenced of designating the different parties by their relative positions in the chamber), M. de la Rigaudie, in a vehement speech, interrupted every moment by murmurs of disapprobation, arraigned the entire Revolution, and excited such a commotion that the police forbade the journals to publish a full account of the proceedings. A reply was made to this speaker, and fortunately, not in the exaggerated style he had employed. M. Durbach made a very reasonable proposition to the chamber, which was, to take possession of all the unsold national property, and make it the basis of a financial operation, by which an indemnification could be made, not to a privileged class of emigrants, but to all, and particularly to the poorest. This proposition was rejected, and the bill passed with the amendments proposed by the committee. An almost unanimous vote of censure was passed on M. Ferrand's speech.

The prosecutions carried on against the memoir of Carnot,

the different events relative to the Invalides, to the female orphans of the Legion of Honour, to the military schools, and to the Generals Vandamme and Exelmans, the journeys of the princes, the conduct pursued with regard to the Archbishop of Besançon, the law about the surrender of the unsold national property, and the expressions of M. Ferrand about the *right line*, had rendered the months of October and November a period of great agitation. The species of tranquillity that had prevailed after the first legislative discussions, and especially after the vote on the budget, which was a measure stamped with wisdom, had given place to violent agitation, not less violent amongst the partisans of the emigration than of the Revolution. The latter comprised at this period not alone those revolutionists who had seriously compromised themselves, such as the *voters*, but also the functionaries of the empire, the military, the moderate liberals, and a great number of the citizen class who were offended by the pretensions of the nobility and clergy. The public journals, though restrained by the censorship, reflected clearly the irritation of both parties. Paris presented a highly animated spectacle. It was the beginning of the winter season, and many persons of importance had returned to the capital. The police kept a strict watch on them. These were MM. de Bassano, de Vicence, de Montalivet, de Cadore, de Rovigo, Lavalette, and others, who did not enter into conspiracies, but who lived amongst revolutionists, and who could not be sorry for the errors of a government that they regarded as adverse to them. The government would have been glad to expel them from Paris, but dared not. These gentlemen were so cautious that Prince Cambacérès, who enjoyed the society of his friends only at his own table, forbore to invite the military for fear of exciting suspicion.

There was one circumstance which much perplexed the police, and though of no importance in reality, kept them in continual agitation. This was the presence of some of the marshals, who ought to have been in their departments, but who had come to Paris one after another by mere chance, and without any political motive. The names of Soult, Suchet, Oudinot, Massena, and Ney were mentioned. Marshal Soult had come to prefer a petition, and as we shall presently see, the Bourbons had nothing to fear from him. Marshal Suchet, who had commanded the two armies in Spain, was at Paris only because these two armies had been disbanded. He was of a peaceful disposition, and generally looked upon as the man best fitted to become war minister. Marshal Massena having obtained his letters of naturalisation, had set out for Provence, whither his duties called him. Marshal Oudinot had only remained some days at

Paris. Marshal Ney took up a permanent abode in the capital. More flattered by the princes than any of his brother marshals, he had in the commencement seemed very much pleased, but had suddenly become malcontent. Having flattered himself that by the intervention of Louis XVIII., and the favour of the Emperor Alexander, he could retain his emoluments, which were the produce of foreign possessions, he was disappointed in this hope, and reduced to his pay. Burdened with a large family, he found himself embarrassed. The war, which to him, as to others, had seemed protracted, was, however, a source of glory and profit which was now closed; he already regretted warfare, and preferred to it an idleness mingled with many causes of annoyance. In fact, the false flatteries of which he had been the object had gradually assumed their true character, and contempt peeped out from amid compliments. His beautiful and haughty wife had experienced at the Tuileries from the court ladies, who were less prudent than their husbands, annoyances which she felt deeply, and which had greatly offended her irritable husband.* One circumstance had put the acme to the marshal's ill-humour. The Duke of Wellington had been appointed English ambassador at Paris, and displayed in the French capital considerable vanity, the only weakness of this simple and strong mind. He enjoyed with much self-complacency at the court of France the glory of his conquests, which the royalist party took pleasure in exalting. At this moment there was a universal outburst of angry feeling against England, for to her were attributed the severe conditions of the treaty of Paris. The destruction of Washington, recently burned by the English army (the war was still going on between England and America), had exasperated all parties to such a degree that it became necessary to restrain even the royalist journals. Besides, the English army had passed from Bordeaux to Brussels overland. Lord Wellington, though at Paris, seemed to command this army, and the French people, as if they had foreseen the fast-coming future, were deeply irritated. This feeling rose to such a pitch that the police were obliged to keep continual watch lest Lord Wellington should be publicly insulted.

When Marshal Ney compared the loneliness in which he and his wife found themselves at the Tuileries with the eager flattery of which the British general was the object, his soul was filled with bitterness. "This man," he said, speaking of

* A gentleman whose character and high position put his testimony beyond doubt, assured me that he saw in the hands of Madame Ney a letter from her husband, written at Lons-le-Saulnier, the very day he abandoned the cause of the Bourbons for that of Napoleon. In the letter were these words—"My love, you shall not again have cause to weep on leaving the Tuileries."

Lord Wellington, "has been successful in Spain owing to the errors of Napoleon, and not of our generals; but should we happen some day to meet him in a position where fortune has not prepared everything for his triumph, the world shall see what he is. And then to see him flattered in this way in the presence of French marshals, he, the bitterest enemy of France!"

The generous indignation that the marshal experienced became so strong that he could no longer conceal his feelings; he even renewed his intimacy with Marshal Davout, with whom he had been at variance since the fatal day of Krasnoé. Marshal Davout, who, as we have said, had retired to his estate at Savigny, had drawn up a circumstantial statement of his conduct at Hamburg, in which he demonstrated beyond all possibility of doubt the baseness of the calumnies of which he had been made the object. He asked the king's permission to publish the memoir. The king, instead of treating this faithful servant of his country with the distinction he deserved contented himself with telling the war minister that the reasoning of the memoir was strong, so strong that it would be impossible to treat the production with severity (this silly idea had been entertained), and that the publication would be permitted. And notwithstanding this declaration on the part of the king, the marshal was allowed to remain in the kind of real though not avowed exile in which he lived at Savigny. But it must be said that it was the marshal who had banished himself to Savigny; he seldom went to Paris, where he could not appear without being beset by spies.

The conduct pursued towards the glorious defender of Hamburg was one of the principal causes of the exasperation of the military. They said, and with justice, that such conduct was shameful, and insulting to the entire army. Ney repeated these expressions wherever he went, and declared that the marshals ought to unite, and lay their complaints at the foot of the throne.

The princes would have been glad to silence these indiscreet men whom they had uselessly flattered, but they dared not strike hard enough to effect that object. The audacity of the emigrant party, and their desire of vengeance, had not yet risen so high as to aim at the glorious head of Ney. To engender such an ambition, fresh disasters and a vast catastrophe must happen. No stronger measure was adopted than to send General Vandamme away from Paris, who, since he had been denied the *entrée* of the Tuileries, had given utterance to the most imprudent expressions. But the evil was not remedied by these means, and during the month of November the public disquietude increased

daily. The funds went down, and the five per cents., which M. Louis' financial plan had raised from 65 to 78 francs, fell to 70, though the financial position of affairs was visibly improving, though the indirect taxes were coming in, and the *reconnaissance de liquidation* were negotiable on 'change at a very low premium. Public confidence was severely shaken, and the cause of this disturbance was political, not financial.

M. de Chateaubriand took up his pen on the occasion, and unlike his wont, his style was steady, sober, and rational. He endeavoured to calm all parties by proving to them that extreme desires were irrational, and impossible to be realised; whilst, on the contrary, rational desires were either realised, or about to be so; that consequently all parties ought to be satisfied, and contribute to the triumph of a state of things in which both had an equal interest: the royalists because it was the cause of the Bourbons; the revolutionists and Bonapartists because it was the cause of liberty, which was the sole possible guarantee for the rights and security of all. He thus gave all parties, and particularly his own, good and prudent lessons—lessons more prudent than his own conduct. He gave these lessons in articles inserted in the *Journal des Débats*, or contained in pamphlets, which the king praised publicly. But nothing could allay the general disquietude and the fear with which each party inspired the other.

Both believed they were plotted against, and that the plots were ripe for execution. The Bonapartists—that is to say, the military men and the revolutionists, united in common hate against the royalists—were persuaded that twelve or fifteen hundred of the most daring Chouans had been brought to Paris with the intention of securing their assistance in removing the king to Compiègne, that the government would be afterwards changed, the Charter abolished, the most remarkable persons amongst the military and the revolutionists seized, the principal put to death, the others exiled, and then the unconditional re-establishment of the ancient régime proclaimed. On the other hand, the royalists, to whom these projects were attributed, were convinced that the young generals who flocked to Paris, and who had some thousands of unemployed officers under their command, and could reckon on the adhesion of some regiments, were about to execute a *coup de main*, carry off the royal family, murder or send them beyond the seas, treat the French nobility in the same manner, and proclaim Napoleon I. or Napoleon II., and commence a new imperial reign by ravaging Europe for the advantage of a race of mamelukes, the offspring of war, and whom peace could not satisfy. This great conspiracy was, in the opinion

of the royalists, concerted in conjunction with Napoleon and Murat, who had been lately reconciled, and who subsidised all the conspirators. The suppositions about Napoleon were boundless, as was the idea entertained of his ceaseless activity and his prodigious influence. Never had he occupied a larger place in the imagination of men than when banished to the wretched isle that served as his asylum, for whilst hate laboured to paint him as a vile wretch, devoid alike of genius and courage, fear converted him into an indefatigable giant, exhaustless in resource, always on the alert, and now on the eve of overturning the world. He had, it was said, carried off vast treasures to Porto Ferrajo, whence he guided the thread of all the European conspiracies, particularly those of Vienna, where the powers were at this moment assembled in general congress. He fanned the flame of discord in that capital, and held his weak-minded father-in-law in subjection, as he was about to put himself at the head of the Austrian armies, and fall upon the French and Spanish Bourbons. At other times the current report was that Napoleon had escaped, and taken the command of the American armies against England, or of the Turkish armies against Europe, or of the Neapolitan against Austria, for contradictory reports cost nothing. In a word, Napoleon was believed to be everywhere, and the fear felt by his enemies compensated for the efforts their hate made to diminish his greatness. Of the thousand plots which each party attributed to the other, how much was true? All and none. All, if we consider as plots the empty remarks of partisans; nothing, if we only regard as plots projects maturely concerted between chiefs and agents who understand each other perfectly well, who have at their command means proportioned to the object in view, and who have appointed, or are ready to appoint, the day for executing their project. But nothing of this kind existed. It was certainly impossible to deny that, had they been able, the royalists would have annihilated the Charter, and had they been as wicked as their words, they would willingly have got rid of the heads of the army and the chiefs of the revolutionist party. But they were more powerless than their adversaries, they possessed far less courage, and contented themselves with uttering extravagant expressions, which, being repeated to the revolutionists and the Bonapartists, threw them into actual terror. But on the other hand, it was equally true, that had the Bonapartists and the revolutionists possessed the power, they would have seized the royal family and their court, and done no matter what with them, provided they could only get rid of them. It is equally true, that had they agreed amongst themselves, combined and pulled together, they would have been able to accomplish all they wished, for public opinion

was entirely in their favour. It is also true, that perceiving what they might have been able to do, they foolishly declared that they were about to do it, and by the intemperance of their language they rendered themselves as formidable as they were really powerless. The public mind might have regained tranquillity, had the public been able to perceive the real state of parties; but according to custom, the public estimated the designs of parties by their words and by their own fears. Consequently, both sides took precautions. Frequently did these agitated military men pass the night standing, with their swords and pistols in their belts, convinced that they were about to be attacked; whilst the terrified police, having given the alarm to the authorities, the national guard, the companies of the bodyguard, and all the disposable forces, were called out, excepting the garrison troops, who were held in suspicion: both parties continued in this state until day dawned, each causing the other daily alarm.* On a night spent in this fashion, in the month of November, the patrols crossed each other in hundreds, without any other result than exciting a general panic, which destroyed all public confidence, and lowered the funds, to the great detriment of the finances.

The principal police—that is, the government force, commanded by M. Beugnot—did not indulge in these ridiculous alarms, or at least only in a very slight degree; and they, in their reports, endeavoured to tranquillise the king, which was no difficult task, for his majesty, through natural indolence and love of ease, was inclined to take pacific views of things. But Monsieur, who could not remain quiet, and his police, who were equally incapable of enjoying tranquillity, declared that France was on the brink of a volcano, which was ready to break forth, that the official police were incompetent, that they actually betrayed the trust reposed in them, and that the royal family ran the risk of being carried off some morning in consequence of their blind credulity. Monsieur went to the king, told him he was badly served, and that he was on the eve of a catastrophe. The king rejected his advice, and told him that he was, as usual, the tool of intriguers; and yet the king was somewhat disturbed by these incessant alarms, and fell into a kind of perplexity.

His nephews, whose opinion the king valued much more than his brother's, joined the Count d'Artois, declaring that things were in a bad state, and ought to be remedied in some way. But this was the difficulty. Things were undoubtedly

* Nothing can be more amusing than the succession of police reports drawn up by M. Beugnot. It is evident from these reports that the month of November was one of groundless alarms, which induced the ministerial changes we are about to relate.

in a bad state, and the remedy was one which governments will never recognise, which is, to resist the promptings of their own passions, and still more, to reject the passion-prompted advice of their friends, to tranquillise the mass of the nation, who were not partisans, and desired only the general good. But they were far from reasoning in this fashion, and complained of those who governed—that is to say, of the ministry, who are generally held responsible for everything that occurs in a State that is free, or nearly so. The ministry, it was said, had no unity, which was perfectly true. But in order that the ministry should possess unity, it ought to have been constitutionally organised—that is to say, the ministry ought to constitute the sole council of the crown, from which the princes should be excluded; and one, or at most two, principal men chosen, in whom implicit confidence should be placed. But the government was far from thinking of such means, and complained not of the council or its formation, but of each individual minister, and of the war minister in particular. He did not restrain the army, it was said; he possessed no influence over the soldiers, and knew neither how to govern nor content them. Such is the recompense reserved for weak-minded ministers! General Dupont was as unfortunate during this short ministry as he had been in Spain. He was a man of talent, and well intentioned; he had done all in his power to satisfy his ancient companions in arms; he had concealed their follies, and in short, endeavoured to satisfy them and the emigrants, but had only succeeded in rendering both parties discontented. It would have been impossible in his position not to commit faults, as it would have been impossible to content the army, that was obliged to undergo severe reductions, and submit to a régime highly displeasing to the military of every grade. And he had committed faults, and serious ones, but who obliged him to commit them? Those very princes who accused him; it was they who had done so, by establishing the military household, and by lavishing commissions as rewards for services during emigration, &c., &c. When the anticipated and inevitable result of these faults became apparent, the princes blamed the too-complaisant minister, who had acted at their suggestion, and said that it would be dangerous to leave the army under his control. The king made no objection, for he did not understand the business, and seemed inclined to yield implicit credence to his nephews, who busied themselves very much in the affair.

There was another subject on which the king was disinclined to listen to the remarks made; in the first place, because these remarks originated with his brother, and in the next, because his judgment was sufficiently clear to let him see that

they were made without sufficient foundation. He was told that the police were badly, deplorably constituted—that it was a matter of which M. Beugnot, intelligent as he was, understood nothing, that he was duped by the Bonapartists, and was unconsciously deceiving the king, and hurrying the destruction of the monarchy. Louis XVIII. was annoyed in the highest degree by these remarks, which he plainly saw originated with his brother, who was ever inclined to interfere, and was the constant dupe of the intriguers of every régime. The king regularly read M. Beugnot's witty and amusing reports, which were seasoned with a little skilful flattery, and presented a piquant picture of contemporary personages. The truth of these reports was evident to his good sense, and their piquancy amused him, whilst their flattery gratified his self-love. But Monsieur tried to persuade him that M. Beugnot only entertained him with gossip, and that there was but one man in France who, if his majesty would venture to confide in him, could properly fulfil the functions of minister of police, and save the kingdom. Will it be believed that this man was the regicide Fouché! Monsieur, even when he did not hate people, could never do them justice, through want of discernment and coolness of judgment; but he had suddenly become not only impartial, but indulgent, even friendly, towards M. Fouché. The latter, as we have already said, was not in Paris at the time the revolution of 1814 occurred, but since then he had sought to take up the part he would have played on that occasion, by interfering wherever his interference would be permitted. When Monsieur sought to be invested with the lieutenant-generalship of the kingdom by the Senate, he had found the Duke of Otranto officious, zealous, skilful, and although a regicide, free from hatred of the Bourbons, and at least as anxious to please them as to get the Senate out of its embarrassing position. He had consequently conceived the most favourable opinion of the man, and entertained a friendly feeling towards him. These favourable dispositions had been confirmed by the reports of the agents of the Pavillon Marsan. There were undoubtedly many royalists amongst these agents, but the greater number was composed of men ready to assist any régime, men whom the police employ, and fling aside when their services are no longer needed, and who, when rejected, offer their services to any one that will enable them to procure their daily subsistence. They are an abject race, whom an honest man never employs, only from necessity, when it is his duty to watch over the safety of the State; and whom he is only too happy to break with, once he is relieved of the cares of government. Far from avoiding the society of such men, M. Fouché eagerly sought their acquaintance, and often sup-

ported them at his own expense when he could not dispose of the resources of the State. By these means he collected information of all kinds, true and false, without, however, always distinguishing the one from the other, which added to what he himself collected in his visits, alternately paid without offending any of them, to MM. Carnot, de Lafayette, de Blacas, de Bassano, and even the foreign ministers, whose doors opened to the talisman of news—he thus acquired the air of a magician, knowing all things, guiding everything; and possessing the secrets, the confidence, and guiding the will of all parties, whom he could restrain or set loose as he pleased. In a word, he seemed the king of this chaos, which he alone could organise and govern.

These agents, repelled by the official police, and received at the Pavillon Marsan, were the assiduous panegyrists of M. Fouché to the Count d'Artois, and succeeded in inducing the prince to receive him. Yielding to his natural taste for intrigue, the Count d'Artois admitted M. Fouché, and was charmed by the conversation he had with him. M. Fouché, unlike Carnot, far from boasting of being a regicide, expressed, on the contrary, the humiliation and repentance that it caused him; and speaking with respect and submission, declared his ardent desire to repair his fault by supporting and saving the Bourbons. Then making use of his knowledge of men and things, he dazzled the prince, to whom he appeared the saviour to whose care the destiny of the monarchy ought to be entrusted; and thus the Count d'Artois, the idol of the ultra-royalists, passed to the opposite extreme, even to the region of regicides, to associate with an unprincipled intriguer, and bestow on him the confidence that he refused to the most respectable friends of liberty.

It was under these circumstances he conceived the idea of getting the Duke d'Otranto appointed minister of police to Louis XVIII.—an appointment of which he not only gave him hope, but almost certainty. The Duke d'Otranto left the prince with the most sanguine expectations, and proclaimed to every one his desire and hope of re-entering the ministry. M. d'Artois had, however, promised too much. It was not in his power to bestow portfolios as he would; and his good opinion, far from winning that of Louis XVIII. for the same object, had a contrary effect. The promised portfolio not appearing, M. Fouché was offended, and went about Paris telling that he had been offered the ministry of police, but had refused. All this was very skilfully related to Louis by M. Beugnot, and the king laughed at his brother whenever he was not made too angry by these provoking accounts.

The ministers of war and police were both thus attacked

at court, the sole employment of the latter being director-general, with the title of minister of State. The king, fond of repose, averse to change, and seeing that there was more of danger than utility in the proposed remedies, told M. de Blacas of the annoyances with which he was beset. M. de Blacas agreed with the monarch; for though prejudiced, he was not devoid of good sense, and was, besides, willing to agree with his master. However, he was too sincere to conceal the truth from the king, or to hide from him that many complaints were made against the war minister and the chief of police. The king was perplexed, and had it been possible, would have been very much agitated; but his cumbrous body weighed down his mind, and often oppressed it even to inertia.

The month of November had passed in domestic anxieties, which were seldom revealed to the gaze of the public, when on Wednesday, the 30th of November, the king, being about to go with great pomp to a theatrical representation at Odeon, Monsieur's police took alarm, and hastened to the Tuileries, where they announced a plot that was to be put into execution on that very day. The object of this plot, they said, was to seize the king and royal family, and either fling them into the Seine, or carry them off to some other country, and then change the government. This bold stroke was to be accomplished by some hundreds of audacious and intrepid military men. These were in communication with the heads of the different parties, and all arrangements were made for what was to follow, once the deed was accomplished. The official police knew nothing of all this, which was an additional reason for the extreme royalists giving it explicit credence. Marshal Marmont and his company of bodyguards came to attend the king. He was as credulous as thoughtless, and moreover, detested General Dupont, because this minister occupied a place he thought due to himself, and which he had still a vague hope of obtaining. He was consequently one of those who most frequently asserted that the army was not properly guided, and was left a prey to conspirators. On the morning of the 30th he was awakened by one of those official agents who usually disturb the repose of courts, and being informed of the plot that was to be executed that evening, he ran all breathless to the king, to whom he made the greatest display of devotion, without, however, exciting either gratitude or anxiety in that prince; for Louis had little faith in the danger that was announced to him. The marshal commanded his guards to mount, sent a message to General Maison, commanding the first military division, and General Dessoles, commanding the national guards, both of whom hastened to call out their soldiers; whilst Marmont

took very good care not to give the least information to the minister of war, who ought to have been the first informed. The principal persons of the court resumed their military dress, secreted arms of every kind about their persons, and proceeded to Odeon armed to the very teeth. The streets were filled with troops, the boxes of the theatre with uniforms, which gave the affair rather the air of a review than of a theatrical representation. In the midst of this display of uniforms, one man alone—the war minister—arrived, dressed in a black coat, and with an air of indifference and ignorance that was most offensive to all those who were oppressed by zeal, terror, or prudence.

The king was applauded as usual, and retired without being attacked or offended. The next day the newsmongers laughed loudly at this violent alarm; but those who pretended that they had saved the king—and Marshal Marmont was at the head of these—were indignant at the carelessness of the war minister and the director of police. There was the most unheard-of excitement at court; and as some change was necessary to calm people's minds after all this agitation, a modification of the ministry was demanded. The king's nephews demanded the appointment of a new war minister, and his brother begged that there should be a new director of police. The king, wearied, and believing in the end that he had been in danger, yielded, and consented to the desired changes.

He would not listen to the proposal of making the Duke d'Otranto minister of police, and confided the functions of this office to M. d'André, an old Constituent, a well-informed functionary, industrious and sensible, and who had corresponded with the Bourbons during their residence in England, for all which reasons he inspired the emigration party with sufficient confidence. But whilst he gratified his brother by removing M. Beugnot, Louis XVIII. did not mean to sacrifice him, but rather to elevate his position, which he did by appointing him naval minister, an office that had just become vacant by the death of the distinguished and lamented M. Malouet. M. Beugnot was thus doubly recompensed for his witty and sensible reports; for he was not only freed from the police, but was appointed minister, with a portfolio.

The war minister was still to be appointed. The army at that time possessed two men—Marshals Davout and Suchet—who united in an eminent degree the rare qualities required in a war minister, and in whom moral influence was joined to administrative talents. The appointment of Marshal Davout was impossible, for he was an object of hatred both to the allies and the emigrants. He could not even be thought of. Marshal

Suchet, whose natural disposition inclined him to that sagely liberal government which the Bourbons might have established in France, and besides being very well liked at court, had been more than once spoken of as suited to the office of war minister. He had indeed, without his knowledge, figured in all the ministerial combinations which the Duke d'Otranto had proposed to Monsieur. However, being a man of great reserve, he had not testified sufficient devotion to win the good opinion of the court. Marshal Soult, contrary to what might have been expected, had succeeded completely with the royalists, whose idol he had become, as M. Fouché was that of the Count d'Artois' coterie. We shall now see by what means he reached this high degree of favour.

He had been ill treated at first, because of his having fought the battle of Toulouse after peace had been declared, and ill treated most unjustly, for he was ignorant of the state of affairs of Paris at the time, and consequently became a malcontent and a daring malcontent, so unmeasured was the expression of his feelings. General Dupont, an excellent man, who was seeking to gain as many adherents as he could for the Bourbons, had received and listened to Marshal Soult, whom he inspired with some little hope, and succeeded at the same time in calming his feelings somewhat. This minister, pursuing his work, resolved to give an appointment to Marshal Soult, that he might attach him definitely to the Bourbons, and for that purpose determined to send him to Alsace; but upon reflection he preferred Brittany, a province that would test the fidelity of a doubtful functionary. The loyalty of this province was such as to call forth all sorts of danger, whilst, at the same time, it afforded an opportunity of ascertaining the sincerity of the man's conversion who should be employed there. The war minister's calculations were crowned with success. Marshal Soult, surrounded by the most ardent royalists, had given them perfect satisfaction, and had shown himself their equal, at least in political sentiments, for he did not hesitate to declare that for twenty-five years past the Bourbons had been the "good cause;" that those who had served another had been deceived, but that they were ready to repair their error by an unbounded devotion. He did not confine himself to mere words, but went to visit the mournful battlefield of Quiberon, where he found some unburied bones, as often happens on a field of battle, and opened a subscription for the erection of a monument to the French officers who had fallen on that fatal day. Those brave men most undoubtedly deserved to be held in sad remembrance, who, employing their bravery so ill, had perished on the gloomy banks of the Quiberon; but this was not the time to renew such memories, and one may be

indeed surprised to find them awakened by the new governor of Brittany.

The astonishment of the army was as great as the satisfaction of the royalists. Marshal Soult was a valuable conquest that merited preservation. He had been excluded from the peerage, together with the Marshals Massena and Davout, and therefore when he completed the subscription for the monument at Quiberon, he returned to Paris to renew his solicitations for that distinction; he was very badly received by his old comrades, but very well by the court. He was still occupied in this pursuit when the office of war minister became vacant. It was almost unanimously agreed to confer it upon him at once, notwithstanding the pretensions of Marshal Marmont, which nobody considered serious. As Marshal Soult combined with an unusual application to business the deportment of a determined man accustomed to command, he seemed the very personification of an accomplished minister of war. This choice filled the public with surprise, and the court with joy and hope.

These different appointments were published on the 4th of December by royal ordinance. The king had rather consented to than desired them. A strange circumstance, but a natural one for the time, and which shows the idea entertained of a constitutional government at its commencement, was that the royal council learned these ministerial changes only a few hours before the general public. M. de Blacas informed his colleagues, in the name of the king, of what had occurred. They were much surprised, but did not apprehend that the harmony of the cabinet would be disturbed by these events. M. de Blacas despatched a courier with an account of the ministerial changes to M. de Talleyrand, who had already set out for the Congress of Vienna, and he with whom these modifications ought to have originated was scarcely made acquainted with them even after their accomplishment. As Louis XVIII. disliked explanations, because that his repose and royal dignity suffered somewhat by them, he would not speak himself to Marshal Dupont. He had avoided receiving him since the scene at Odeon, sometimes alleging illness as a cause, and sometimes that he was about to take his customary exercise; but on the 3rd of December he sent M. de Blacas to demand his portfolio, and offer him a pension of 40,000 francs, together with a provincial appointment. M. de Blacas took care to inform General Dupont that he was not the author of this change, which was indeed true; he surprised him not a little by announcing the name of his successor, and attributed his dismission to the king.

Thus ended the crisis, by the dismissal of the war minister,

to whom were attributed the bad feelings of the army, and by the change of the minister of police, who was blamed for imaginary conspiracies merely because he would not believe in their existence. As always happens in such cases, a short calm ensued until the inutility of the remedy had been felt, and the sinister prophecy of Napoleon had been realised—"*The Bourbons will reconcile France with the rest of Europe, but set her at war with herself.*"

END OF VOL. X.

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